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# **THE EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH I**





III EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH OF AUSTRIA  
Photographed shortly before his death

# THE EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH I

AN INTIMATE STUDY

BY HIS  
*VALET DE CHAMBRE*  
*EUGEN KETTERL*

RELATED BY  
CISSY KLASTERSKY

TRANSLATED BY  
M. OSTHEIDE



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## FOREWORD

A VALET writing memoirs ! One hardly knows whether the idea seems grotesque, or merely presumptuous ! Following Emperors, Kings, Politicians, Generals and Poets—a *valet de chambre* ! Saul among the prophets indeed ! !

. . . . .

The events leading up to the writing of the valet Ketterl's memoirs are strange. From the Viennese and foreign newspapers one knows that Ketterl went to law against the heirs of Francis Joseph with a suit demanding that, in accordance with the wish and promise of his royal master, he should be paid a legacy which would at least cover the necessities of life. Such lawsuits are everyday affairs, and anyone who is compelled to fight for his elemental rights usually does so with all the bitterness and anger of which he is capable. The general public usually is—and rightly—on the side of the man who is forced by injustice to seek redress at law.

For Ketterl, however, the path to the courts was the stoniest road possible ; it was the last resource



of a man who, from a certain respect, did not wish to cite before the law either his late master, or any members of that master's family ; for Ketterl, having grown up in a milieu where the Emperor ranks second only to God, and having had the great good fortune of passing many years of his life near his idolised master, felt he would be ungrateful in the extreme to bring a lawsuit against his master's heirs. Only when anxiety for his wife and child threatened to become unbearable did this faithful servant begin to entertain the idea that in bringing pressure to bear upon the Emperor's family he would merely be insisting on his dead master's own wishes being fulfilled.

This excused Ketterl to himself, and excused him, too, in the eyes of all those to whom this lawsuit might otherwise have seemed an impious action.

When Ketterl approached me, asking me to help him to come to a decision, he told me that he had often been asked to write an account of Francis Joseph as he had known him.

Ketterl, quite rightly, did not feel himself called upon to pass judgment on the master he had so faithfully served, but we eventually decided to relate, quite simply, the actual facts as Ketterl knew them, offering them to the reading public without bias or comment.

My task was to eliminate from Ketterl's account anything that might have been prejudiced by his personal point of view, in order to render it an entirely impartial statement, that is yet the record of a "faithful servant of his Lord."

CISSY KLASTERSKY.



# THE EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH I

## CHAPTER I

HOW I BECAME *VALET DE CHAMBRE* TO HIS MAJESTY

**M**Y father, a worthy God-fearing man, well liked by all the people of the district, was a staunch Austrian of the old type, and earned just enough to bring his children up honestly. We were four robust boys, and as our father's income did not keep pace with our appetites, we opened a shop in the centre of the city where we sold fine hand-made pipes and ivory carvings. We were brought up very strictly and, even if we had not studied Law, we knew quite well what respect was due to one in authority—which at home began with the head of the house. His work in the capital enabled my father to send me to a good commercial school, and to go with me several times a week to see the changing of the guard at the Castle, where we used to gaze admiringly at the wonderful Imperial Guards with their flashing halberds, uniforms glittering with gold, and waving plumes. How I longed to become a soldier before the Castle! Often with almost envious awe I used to follow these stalwart, fine figures of

men for long distances, thinking what an immense influence they must have in Austria, seeing the Emperor daily and thus having every chance of making requests to him. I certainly never dreamed that the day would come when I should be permitted to be much nearer to our ruler than these soldiers in their splendid uniforms, or that one day I should discover that being in the immediate neighbourhood of the Emperor had nothing whatever to do with the possibility of influencing him. It was a lesson, however, that many people more important than His Majesty's *valet de chambre* had to learn.

When my father died I had barely left school, and thanks to my zealous reading of the newspapers—in particular the “situations vacant” column—I obtained a place on Count Bellegarde's estate. Gradually I was promoted to castle steward, and was finally, at the age of thirty-five, recommended by the Count to the butler's department at the Court in Vienna, where I did my best not to disgrace my patron, Count Bellegarde, either by my cleaning of the knives and forks, or by my waiting. This lasted two years. The consciousness that I was doing my duty to the very best of my ability gave me corresponding self-respect. This, however, began to waver considerably when one day a Comptroller of the Household appeared at my home and said to me sharply: “Ketterl, pull yourself together and report at once to Count Paar in His Majesty's apartments. The carriage is waiting for you.”

Count Paar not belonging to my immediate circle, I could not imagine why I had to report to him. The Court carriage standing before the house was already

besieged by the entire neighbourhood, and as I was not in the habit of using that conveyance the whole affair appeared quite inexplicable. It is not for a manservant to question a Comptroller of the Household, so after I had convinced myself—by tugging energetically at my ear—that I was not dreaming, I had to be patient until the *aide-de-camp* himself should help me to solve the riddle. My request that I might be permitted to change my clothes was refused before it was really uttered, and so, greeted by the assembled populace with something approaching awe, I stepped very self-consciously into the imperial carriage. It was the first time that I had not gone to the Castle on Shanks's pony.

With rapidly beating heart I sat in the *calèche*. Every time the Comptroller of the Household, my companion, glanced out of the window I hurriedly straightened my collar, my tie or my suit, and, as if by accident, rubbed my shoes on the carriage rug, in the hope of polishing them a bit. Yet in spite of all my efforts I never for a moment doubted but that my attire did not quite conform to the demands of Court etiquette. All at once I found myself standing before His Majesty's *aide-de-camp*, Count Paar, who murmured some unintelligible words of which I only caught "personal service," and then, before I realised what was happening, I was pushed through a door and I found myself in the Emperor's presence.

I believe that I stammered out something to the effect that "I lay myself at Your Majesty's feet." I cannot vouch for it; for my memory may have been influenced by the fact that I learned later that this was the usual mode of address when entering

His Majesty's rooms. The only thing that I remember quite distinctly is that I held out my hand to the Emperor! And when it dawned on me what a dreadful thing I had done I could no longer withdraw it, for the Emperor, obviously amused by my "condescension," would not let go my hand, but shook it heartily, saying :

"So you are coming to me now? You must be a bit patient with me—I'm an old man. Where do you come from? Vienna? Ah, I'm glad. Have you been a soldier? You will accompany me on my journey, so that we get to know one another. You have only to see that my wardrobe is in good order. *Auf Wiedersehen!*"

I do not know how I got back home. My wife was standing in the passage surrounded by all the neighbours. Breathlessly I burst into a room, pulling her in by the arm. So happy and excited that I could hardly take time to draw a full breath I told her all that had taken place. Afterwards I felt I had to set out again immediately. I simply could not bear to remain in the house a moment longer; I did not want to be questioned or to answer questions. I felt that I must be alone, so I rushed down the steps to the street, and into the Prater.

I know that the reader will laugh incredulously when I say that after all these years I can repeat word for word what the Emperor said to me—but if so, the reader will be wrong. In the life of every man there are some moments which remain unchangeable and imperishable throughout the years. The Emperor had spoken to me! The Emperor had shaken my hand! I should see the Emperor daily, be with him

continually ! Over and over again I repeated this to myself, then said it aloud because I could not grasp my good fortune ; then, when I got home later, I had to repeat it all once more, and was delighted when questioned, as it gave me an excuse for beginning yet again.

With this explanation before them perhaps my readers will no longer be unbelieving, although they may laugh pityingly at the foolish old fellow with his servant's soul and servile nature, who makes so much ado because another human being like himself has shaken his hand and been friendly. I do maintain, however, that my father and mother were upright people, good and honourable, who did their duty faithfully, never setting themselves above others, nor yet toadying to any man. Their children were brought up in the same way, and we certainly never dreamed that I was destined to serve royalty. One thing had always been impressed upon me—never to be ashamed of honourable work. Therefore, when my father's death compelled me to earn my bread I never hesitated to undertake any work which was offered to me. Indeed, my experience proves that he who is most arrogant in his dealings with his subordinates is often the most servile to those above him. Believe me, a minister may have a servant's soul, while a valet may be an upright and self-respecting man.



## CHAPTER II

### MY FIRST JOURNEY WITH THE EMPEROR

THE journey on which, according to the Emperor's remarks at our first meeting, I was to win my spurs, drew ever nearer. Naturally I was busy day and night; at first my great aim had been to inform my acquaintances, my friends and relations—not forgetting my enemies—of my promotion, and to see that my appearance was worthy of the position engraved on my new visiting cards; next came the task of learning thoroughly my new duties. I must confess that I suffered as much from stage-fright as a leading lady who, at a critical moment, has been left in the lurch by the prompter. On the journey I was thrown entirely on my own resources, as there was nobody from whom I could glean any hints.

At last the great day (27th February, 1894) dawned—to me and my family a real red-letter day! Our destination was Cap Martin, where the Empress Elisabeth was staying to recuperate. There were as many blessings and good wishes as there were tears when I said good-bye to my wife and child. Through it all was the ever-present thought that I might begin the journey as a brand new *valet de chambre*, and yet be “retired” at the end of it owing to my unsuitability for Court service.

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This, my first journey to the favourite resort of the Empress Elisabeth, made me understand why the First Lady was so enthusiastic about this enchanting spot. As one stood at the edge of the wooded headland, the last remaining bit of the once wide-spreading deer park of the Prince of Monaco, there was no sign of human habitation, and one could easily fancy oneself in a far-away paradise. Far below rocks, like coral reefs fretted by the breakers, rear their heads, glowing in crimson splendour when the sun sinks into the waves. . . .

We did not travel to Cap Martin in the royal train, because His Majesty thought that "it would cost too much."

He also objected to "too much luggage," and consequently only three coaches, including, of course, His Majesty's dining-car, were coupled to the ordinary train scheduled to run there.

After our departure from Vienna early in the morning the Emperor worked for many hours at the official mail, and a courier who had travelled with us left the train when the journey was partly over, taking the documents, which had been attended to, back with him. Then the Emperor had a three days' rest from this work, for the courier only reached Cap Martin again three days later.

We did not go direct to the French Riviera, but made a detour to Munich so that His Majesty might pay a visit to his daughter, Princess Gisela.

The Emperor had a particular fondness for Bavaria, which was only natural seeing that it was the home of his nearest blood-relations, more especially for his son-in-law's palace in the Leopoldstrasse, where

he always felt extraordinarily happy and comfortable.

In the compartment His Majesty read the newspapers he had brought with him, and when midday came, lunch was fetched from the restaurant at whatever station the train had happened to pull up. After lunch Count Paar and Prince Rudolf Liechtenstein took their places by the Emperor, in order to entertain him. The former did this by absolute silence and an occasional drowsy nodding; the latter by drawing upon his inexhaustible stock of stories and anecdotes for tales that he considered interesting. From Prince Liechtenstein as well as from Frau v. Schratt the Emperor learned all the current society talk, so that he was well posted in all that took place; but if the Emperor and Count Paar sat alone in the compartment, then their mutual entertainment was confined to puffing out such thick clouds of smoke that at times it was almost impossible to distinguish in the haze which was the Emperor and which the Count.

Baron Gorup, later Chief Commissioner of Police, at that time Head of the Police Department at Schönbrunn, had gone in advance to Cap Martin with his squad of detectives. Later the Emperor decided to dispense with this guard, for he felt himself safe everywhere so, like "Bearded Count Eberhard, Württemberg's beloved Lord" of the ballad, he dared trust his head not only to each and all of his own subjects, but never feared attempts on his life when abroad—not even in Russia. His Majesty was a fatalist and believed: "As I am destined to die, so shall I die."

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When we arrived in Mentone there was a splendid reception. Her Majesty the Empress and Her Royal Highness the Countess Trani, the Empress's sister, were standing on the platform ready to greet His Majesty when the train ran in.

I myself still felt that I must be dreaming; everything was so new and unusual; I had not yet grown accustomed to my duties, and in addition to that the beautiful southern landscape bewildered me. So it happened that it was only when leaving the train that I asked Councillor Klaudy to give me some small French change.

"For what?" he asked.

"For the porter who looks after our luggage."

"No, my dear Ketterl; the Emperor of Austria only pays in gold!" was the answer.

And the porter got his gold piece.

The journey to Cap Martin was of an entirely private nature. One day Prince Liechtenstein induced the Emperor to visit the Casino at Monte Carlo, thinking that it would provide amusement both for the Emperor and for himself—Count Paar following with his usual bored expression—but the Court Treasurer for the journey could not be found. As the Emperor never carried coin, he borrowed 200 francs from me, giving me an order to the Treasurer for the repayment of the money next day.

So for the moment I, plain Mr. Ketterl, became the banker of one of the most powerful and richest monarchs in Europe. At that time there was no "inflation of currency," and as Rothschild is said to have begun in much the same way, I looked upon this as quite a good start. When the Emperor came

out of the rooms again he really had need of another loan from me, for unfortunately the diplomatic relations between the despot "Lady Luck" and the Austrian Royal Court were always very strained.

The Emperor's stay on the Riviera was, as has been said, entirely unofficial in character, but none the less, accompanied by Count Paar, he visited the drill-ground of the *Chasseurs Alpins* in Mentone. The General-in-Command was much pleased, and begged for an audience with the Emperor so that he might express his thanks, and was honoured by an invitation to dinner the same evening. Here the gallant General, who as an old republican was not well versed in the practices of Court ceremonial, committed the blunder of always addressing His Majesty as "Monsieur." When he noticed the smiles of the gentlemen of the Emperor's suite, he begged His Majesty's pardon in some embarrassment.

"That's all right, General!" answered the Emperor; adding with a smile:

"I am always surrounded by courtiers, but you are a soldier—a comrade!"

The Emperor scarcely enjoyed any rest during his stay at Cap Martin, for at half-past three in the morning he got up as usual and went through the current business of State. Every two days a courier arrived from Vienna, remained twenty-four hours, and then took all the documents, duly attended to, back with him.

Besides being with the different members of the nobility who visited Their Majesties at the hotel, the Emperor and Empress spent a good deal of time with the widowed Empress Eugénie of France, and the

Emperor paid several visits to the Prince of Monaco. After three weeks' stay on the incomparably beautiful Riviera we went back again to Vienna. My probation was over, and with pounding heart I awaited the decision—was the permanent appointment to be given to me, or not ?

## CHAPTER III

### MY WORK

**W**ITH our return to Vienna my real work began, and I received immediately notification of my appointment. As I thanked His Majesty respectfully the next morning he said to me :

“ I can only say that I am very well satisfied with you.”

Already during the journey I had noticed that the Emperor had not been as faithfully served as he should have been. His Majesty's wardrobe, and above all his civilian dress, was in a really deplorable condition.

The former valet, Hornung, whose duty it had been to keep things in good repair, was an old man of eighty, who had let everything slide, and the fact that the Emperor had been content with the service of this slow and self-willed old man shows how modest were His Majesty's demands. Just one example : I was tidying the linen chest when the Emperor asked for a pair of trousers for a particular uniform. Naturally we stopped what we were doing at once, and rummaged in all the boxes, but—as if whisked away by magic—just that one pair of trousers could not be found. Beads of perspiration stood on my forehead, and even though I kept telling myself that



THE AUSTIN IMPERIAL FAMILY IN 1884

the Tintinnabulum and the Tintinnabulum, with all the members of their family, in the year 1884. The Tintinnabulum is the name of the small town of Tintinnabulum, which was founded by the Tintinnabulum family in 1884.





I could not be held responsible for what had happened during my predecessor's term of office, I nevertheless felt much upset to think that I must fail to obey my master's very first order. I called for help, and a resourceful footman thought that he had found a solution—or, better still, a good excuse—so we announced that the trousers had been eaten by the moths. The Emperor's expression did not change at all; he only shook his head and said thoughtfully :

“How dreadful! And to think that they didn't even leave the buttons!”

We had the feeling that our excuse had not been particularly effective.

Anyone who believes that the rich and powerful Emperor of Austria had unlimited linen and footwear is entirely mistaken. In particular was the wardrobe of the “Count of Hohenems”—the title assumed by the Emperor when travelling incognito—more than meagre; apart from a hunting costume, a noticeably old-fashioned dress-suit and a frock-coat almost ancient enough to be historic, there were hardly two usable lounge-suits. I racked my brains for a long time to find out how it happened that the royal wardrobe was so small, and the number of “Purveyors to the Court” so large! The Emperor's “linen” was but cotton, and would not have stood any comparison with my own; but then, Francis Joseph I was not *valet de chambre* to His Majesty the Emperor of Austria.

The old experience that officers who pay much attention to their appearance when in uniform may be very neglectful of even the most elementary detail when in civilian dress, was borne out in the

Emperor's case. He who knew exactly which cap or helmet belonged to each one of his countless uniforms thought nothing of wearing a blue tie with a green lounge-suit. This was perhaps not due so much to absentmindedness as to a complete lack of interest in civilian clothes. If his attention was called to such a slip His Majesty did not take it at all amiss—but he did exactly the same thing next time. I remember that once in the presence of Frau v. Schratt he put his black bowler on as he usually did, that is, at such an angle that any disrespectful puff of wind could have blown it off again. Even he himself noticed it, laughed, and said to Frau v. Schratt :

“It seems to me that Ketterl is right after all when he says that I put my hat on badly. It's true that I wear it right at the back of my head—just like the Jews in Galicia ! ”

The Emperor scarcely paid any attention at all to the fashions, as he almost always wore uniform ; civilian dress he wore only on private journeys abroad, as, for instance, on the occasion of the First Paris Exhibition, or when visiting the Empress in Cap Martin or Nauheim. The only piece of clothing of his civilian wardrobe on which the Emperor cast a sympathetic eye was the “ Bratenrock ” or morning-coat. Once in my presence, when his tailor, Gunkel, was fitting on a dinner-jacket, His Majesty said scornfully :

“So this is the frock-coat without tails in which I now see most men at the theatre. I can only say that it is a very ugly fashion.”

How firm a stand the Emperor took against anything exaggerated in dress is proved by the following

episode—related to me by the former valet Hornung—which took place at the opening of the Suez Canal, where, as is well known, Francis Joseph was present with a large suite. That time not even the first person in his suite, the Prime Minister, Count Beust, escaped His Majesty's ironic comment, for when the Count appeared with his staff of officials from the Foreign Office, their full-dress uniforms called forth the Emperor's scorn. The Heads of Departments and the Councillors appeared in glaring red coats with white trousers, and although His Majesty knew them quite well, he asked who these gentlemen could be. When he received the startling answer that they were officials from the Foreign Office whom he knew quite well, His Majesty smiled sarcastically, saying :

“ Oh, indeed, I thought they were Court footmen ! ”

The full-dress costumes were not seen again after that.

The Emperor's boots and shoes were also badly cared for, as up to my time he used to wear high boots or heavy military shoes with civilian dress.

Consequently one of my first tasks, even before we set off for the Riviera, was to see that my illustrious master had an outfit befitting his rank. The ancient dress-suit was “ pensioned ” and the Court tailor, Gunkel, had to make a new one. In addition I saw to it that a dinner-jacket, a travelling suit, two lounge-suits and a morning-coat were got ready. Then, of course, came ties and hats to match the various suits, black silk socks, and fine zephyr and cambric shirts.

Finally, I introduced a custom previously unknown at the Austrian Court : I had the Emperor's trousers pressed, not only to remove the marks left by the

high boots—but pressed to improve their general appearance !

Thus began my later dictatorship over the Emperor as far as clothes were concerned, and I felt very much flattered when I once heard His Majesty say to Frau v. Schratt :

“ In matters of dress I have to do what Ketterl tells me ; he really understands better than I what things go together.”

So it came to pass that gentlemen of the Court who might at odd times be compelled to exchange uniform for civilian dress came to me for advice—as, for instance, did the Grand Master of the Kitchen, Count Wolkenstein. During our stay at Cap Martin he always paid me a visit before entering His Majesty’s presence, so that I might give an opinion as to whether he was correctly dressed ; he was troubled by many a difficulty in this respect, for he knew no more about the rules of dress than he did about those of his own particular province, the kitchen. Unlike his predecessors, Count Kinsky and the Comptroller of the Household, Councillor Linger, who were both undeniably epicures, Count Wolkenstein was entirely lacking in all understanding of matters gastronomic. He was content simply to walk through the kitchen—a tall, elegant figure of a man—inhaling the savoury odours which rose from the imperial saucepan ; but it never occurred to him to make a single suggestion to the cooks, or to order any particular dish which he might have learned elsewhere. That, however, did not matter at a Court where the ruler himself took little account of what he ate ; neither on a journey nor in

Vienna did the Emperor of his own accord ever express a wish for any special food ; if he was hungry he never mentioned it—evidently thinking that state natural—but if one took him something to eat he was very pleased.

If by any chance the cook was unfortunate, and some dish that was not quite right appeared on the table, His Majesty let it pass quite good-temperedly.

It once happened in Vienna that the Emperor had just broken a roll at breakfast and was about to raise it to his mouth when he found a cockroach baked in it. Tableau ! The bread for the imperial table was delivered by a well-known Court baker, and an assistant—it is not known whether as a demonstration against the monarchy, or whether merely by accident—had baked a cockroach along with the bread, and it had naturally fallen to His Majesty to pick just that particular roll. As a punishment the Court patronage was withdrawn ; in deep despair the master-baker came to me, wringing his hands and begging me to intercede for him with the Emperor, so that he might once more supply the Court. As a matter of fact, the Emperor was far too fair-minded to hold such an accident against the man.

“He couldn’t help it,” said His Majesty, when I put the matter before him one morning while he was dressing ; so the baker once more was entrusted with the baking for the Court.

But to come back to Count Wolkenstein : at Cap Martin he plagued Councillor Klaudy continually, in addition to worrying me, and one day I heard the following peculiar conversation between them :

“Tell me, my dear Councillor,” said the Count,

grasping Klaudy by the top button of his coat, "where do you have your trousers made and pressed?"

The Councillor, weary of these daily questions, answered sharply :

"I let Rothberger make them and Schneider Frank press them."

Count Wolkenstein had a tragic end—he shot himself, presumably because the Stewards had made complaints regarding irregularities that had occurred during his time in office as Grand Master of the Kitchen.

. . . . .

Let us, however, come back to the question of His Majesty's wardrobe.

The Emperor's furs, too, were in very bad condition. When I entered upon my duties he had only one single fur, a present from the Czar Alexander II, with whom His Majesty was very friendly indeed. Knowing Francis Joseph's preference for uniform, the Czar had combined the Russian sable with a grey overcoat with military buttons, which the Emperor wore on his journeys year in and year out.

When I pointed out to His Majesty that this fur had certainly done its duty with twenty years of wear, and that it was time to get a new one, he was horrified, saying :

"But that will cost far too much money!"

Only after much argument did His Majesty decide that he would have a fox fur, but to this I did not agree, because it would have been too heavy. I insisted that my royal master should have a good, yet light weight fur, and tailor Utzel was eventually ordered

to see after one. It cost 800 crowns, which to the Emperor appeared a small fortune, for he was of the opinion that anything procured for his own personal use was superfluous, and should be avoided; consequently I always had a hard fight when it was necessary to buy fresh clothing or furnishings for the Emperor's private apartments, although these were known not to be very comfortably equipped. For example, when it was a question of uniforms in daily use His Majesty would say :

"That tunic is quite good yet—just have it pressed."

Then if I dared to reply :

"But Your Majesty must be well and elegantly dressed, because the people always look at Your Majesty," he would retort :

"That may be; but they don't look at my clothes !"

On the other hand, the Emperor had a lavish stock of foreign uniforms, whose wonderful stuffs and costly gold and silver decorations fairly dazzled the beholder. The Austro-Hungarian uniforms were increasingly in the minority. It is well known that the Emperor always received any visiting prince in the uniform of the visitor's country; consequently it was the custom for foreign potentates to bring as presents to the Austrian Emperor the most gorgeous of their country's uniforms, and apart from that Francis Joseph had always been accorded high rank in the armies of his allies, which naturally brought with it uniforms and military decorations. It is a fact that amongst the orders presented to the Emperor many of the "diamonds" were but paste. It may



be that the illustrious donors knew nothing of it, and that their suppliers counted upon the Austrian ruler's "discretion" !

In spite of his economies Francis Joseph never wore clothes that had been mended. The discarded pieces of linen were stamped with the letter "A" standing for "*ausgemustert*," i.e. signifying that they were set aside, and at the end of the year were not given away, but sold by auction. The same thing happened with the other personal properties of His Majesty; about Christmas a large auction was always held, at which not only socks and shirts, but also brushes, combs, sponges, remnants of soap and even the Emperor's old toothbrushes had a ready sale. The proceeds went to the servants.

On questions of Court etiquette Francis Joseph would not make the slightest concession, and was himself a stickler for details. Once in Ischl the visit was announced of an English deputation, come to discuss the details for an interview with King Edward in Marienbad. At once I had to go to Vienna to fetch His Majesty's English uniform, as he felt it absolutely necessary to receive the Englishmen in the uniform of their own country.

The same thing happened with regard to the farewell audience of Sir Edward Goschen, the English Ambassador. The Emperor was on the point of starting on a hunting trip, and had never been informed at all of the approaching audience, it having been thought that a meeting between the two

could be brought about informally, and that the Emperor coming through the *salon* would shake hands with Sir Edward; but His Majesty, who—wearing leather breeches and with bare knees—was just going into the garden, turned back as soon as he heard the proposal, changed, and received the Ambassador in uniform. Those who had tried to arrange this somewhat unsuccessful interlude did not endeavour to repeat the performance!

. . . . .

The maintenance of the Emperor's wardrobe was always my chief problem, entailing as it did constant looking over of the numerous uniforms, and placing together of the various articles of attire which His Majesty donned for each special occasion. In the imperial dressing-room there were not only the civilian outfits and the uniforms in daily use, but also those of all the foreign regiments of which the Emperor was Colonel-in-Chief, Prussian, Bavarian, English and Russian uniforms hung neatly arranged in groups, each with its label, head covering, sash, cartouche, cord, epaulettes, plumes, facings and side-arms to match. Only think of the number of different uniforms for the German Army alone: gala suit, parade suit, Court suit, evening-dress, undress uniform and service uniform, to each of which first one article might be added or taken away, then another, and you will then see what forethought was required to avoid any blunder against the German regulations referring to uniform and appointments. Many times even my dreams were haunted: I once dreamed that His Majesty wanted the uniform of his Japanese Manchu

Grenadiers, yet with the best of possible intentions I could only find the trousers and even they were moth-eaten! I need hardly say that the Emperor did not possess a Japanese uniform, but in dreams the most unlikely things become matters of the greatest importance.

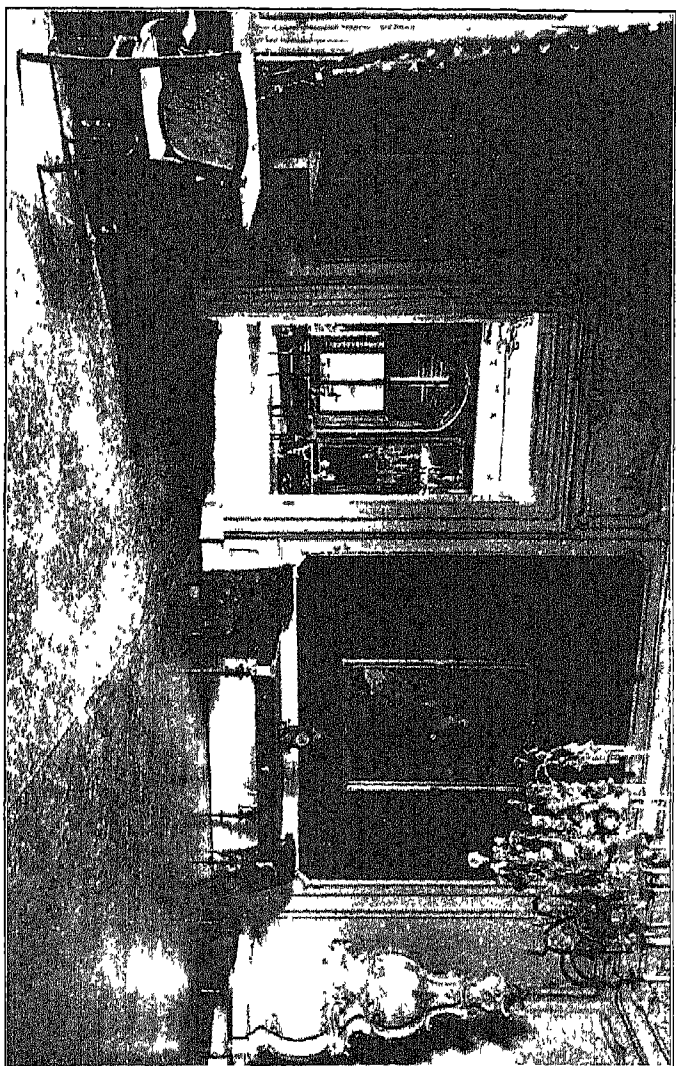
Any part of a uniform which was no longer absolutely immaculate was sorted out, and was on occasion placed at the disposal of those artists who were painting the Emperor in this or that particular uniform.

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It may be of interest to know what the regulations were regarding my own apparel.

On all private journeys, even when His Majesty wished to remain incognito, I wore until breakfast a black lounge-suit, and at breakfast a black tail-coat. When waiting upon the Emperor in the royal train I wore a frock-coat, with the rosette of the "Golden Order of Merit with the Crown" in my buttonhole. On official journeys I wore first thing in the morning the *valet de chambre's* uniform tunic, and later my brown tunic with gold embroidery. In Vienna, Schönbrunn and Ischl I wore a lounge-suit until breakfast; at breakfast a black tail-coat; at midday all my decorations, irrespective of whether His Majesty was dining alone or was receiving guests. In the presence of Bavarian royalty, for instance, of Prince Leopold or Princess Gisela of Bavaria, I added to my Austrian decorations the Bavarian Order of St. Michael.

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THE WRITING ROOM AND WORKROOM AT HONORARY



Naturally I did not have an easy time during the first part of my service. Old Hornung was jealous of me, and also the other servants grumbled about the innovations which I introduced. The mere pressing of the Emperor's trousers had thrown all the good people into a twitter, for to them it appeared an extravagance ; and not only did I have to look after the wearing apparel, but I also attacked very energetically the many deficiencies and lack of comfort due—I can truthfully say—to His Majesty's modesty and unassuming nature on the one hand, and the indolence and carelessness of the Court officials on the other.

I found things in a really shocking state. One can scarcely believe that there was neither a bathroom in the Hofburg in Vienna, nor at Schönbrunn, nor at Ischl. At Schönbrunn the washstand was a collapsible wooden affair, much too small, with sharp edges on which His Majesty bumped himself black and blue—that particular one was dreadfully primitive. His Majesty, however, refused on economical grounds to have a new washstand purchased, so I sheltered behind an official lie, stating that in a distant room at Schönbrunn I had found an English stand very suitable for the Emperor's bedroom. Only then did His Majesty give his consent to the change—upon which I bought from Wahliss a nice, open washstand ; the trick had succeeded, and the Emperor of Austria at last had proper washing accommodation.

His Majesty did not like the telephone at all ; he definitely refused to have one put on his writing-desk, and although he eventually had it installed, he was only persuaded after much difficulty to send his good

wishes to the widowed Crown Princess Stephanie on the occasion of her marriage to Count Elemer Lonyay in 1900 at Miramar.

His Majesty's bedroom at Ischl was so small that there was no place for cupboards, and only a small *Biedermeier* chest of drawers could be put in to hold some linen. Consequently two polished wardrobes stood in the anteroom and along with the rubber bath which the Emperor used every morning. In addition to that I had to find room for a large table, into which extra leaves were sometimes put when deeds and official documents of great size had to be signed, for in His Majesty's really minute study there was only a small and painfully impracticable writing-table.

The Emperor's bedroom was on the sunny side ; consequently it was dreadfully hot, and was in addition the worst room in the imperial villa. Every time His Majesty was asked to choose another room he declined to do so, for he wanted to leave the best apartments for his daughter, Archduchess Valerie, and his grandchildren, thinking in his modesty that this small cabinet was good enough for him.

As I was directly under the Emperor's orders, not under the control of either the Grand Steward or the *aide-de-camp*, my position was fairly independent, and I had the satisfaction of erecting a few barriers in front of the people and officials at Court who thought only of themselves and their own comfort, without ever considering His Majesty's wants. Of this, however, I will write more later.

Now let us get back to business. My room was

next to His Majesty's, and at night the communicating door was left open. I might enter at any moment without knocking, and had to be ready to go in to the Emperor whenever called.

At half-past three to the minute I walked each morning to His Majesty's bed, waking him with the stereotyped words :

"I am at Your Majesty's feet ! Good morning !" The Emperor always replied, "Thank you," asked about the weather, and then jumped straight out of bed and began to dress.

Bathrug and towels had always been placed ready in the bedroom the night before, and now tub and bath attendant came into action. We always had endless trouble with the "washer," for this man was specially selected for a position bringing him into such intimate touch with the Emperor of Austria. To rise at three o'clock in the morning, especially in winter, is not particularly pleasant and certainly not to everyone's taste. "If I am to be on duty at this unearthly hour," thought one honest fellow, "there is really only one way to overcome this early rising difficulty, and that is not to go to sleep at all." No sooner said than done, and thus our bath attendant became a regular guest at the neighbouring "*Vieröckelkeller*" inn. In order to keep awake he drank, but although this method was certainly successful in preventing slumber, mental and physical equilibrium suffered. Consequently, owing to his condition, he forgot the respect due to the sovereign, and occasionally appeared in the early hours before the Emperor's rubber bath in a state scarcely fitting for an audience with his lord and master.



At first His Majesty was rather amused at this somewhat original body-servant who came on duty in such a state that he really needed help himself, and the Emperor merely thought that we had better keep an eye on him for a while, as probably "he couldn't stand much." When for the third time, however, the attendant's inability to stand steadily caused him to clutch His Majesty's arms so firmly that the already very small washing arrangement nearly had two inmates instead of one, his services as "washer" came to an end. Yet His Majesty in his kindness of heart would not permit the man to be dismissed altogether, asking only that a post be given to him that would not provide him with an excuse for staying up until three in the morning in the "*Vieröckelkeller*" inn.

On trips to Ischl and on shortish journeys a bath attendant always accompanied the Emperor; abroad, both on private and official journeys, I undertook these duties. On hunting trips the bath attendant went along, whilst my place was taken by His Majesty's loader, Hoschtalek, who ranked as a door-keeper, but had, of course, passed through the Hunting and Forestry School. On such trips he had not only his hunting duties, but also those of a valet to see to, as well as his proper work in the official sense: namely, to sit on the box when His Majesty was out driving; to run errands and look after the post; in short, when the Emperor was hunting, Hoschtalek was the royal "maid of all work."

Naturally I helped the Emperor to dress in the mornings, and whilst he was making his toilet I was always in the room; that was the time when I made

private requests to His Majesty, gave him bits of information and was fairly often allowed to say a frank word or two. His Majesty grew so accustomed to these morning conversations that he always stopped on the threshold before leaving the room to ask whether "there were any more wishes?"

When the Emperor had finished dressing he knelt at the *prie-Dieu* for his short morning devotions, and then betook himself, without having had a bite to eat, to his desk in order to go through the documents which had arrived the evening before, when they would have been immediately glanced through, and placed in order for an early start. This was also the time when His Majesty's physician, Councillor Kerzl, paid his daily visit; first I gave him my report, remarking that I thought he had better go in, or that I did not consider it necessary that day. He appeared before the Emperor in the morning in jacket or morning-dress, at dinner in uniform, but at Ischl in shooting rig and studded boots, like his sovereign.

Councillor Kerzl had originally been a regimental doctor; he then came to Laxenburg, where he attended "Liesl," the little daughter of Crown Prince Rudolf, and later he also attended the Archduchess Valerie's children. He was promoted to Staff-Surgeon and was recommended to the Emperor by Professor Widerhofer, whose assistant he then was. Widerhofer had been His Majesty's physician until the time he opened his clinic. Kerzl worked up until he was made Chief Staff-Surgeon, was made a Councillor and, finally, received the title of "Excellency," the highest honour that he could attain.

In serious cases Widerhofer and, later, Professors Neusser and Ortner were called in for medical consultations.

After five o'clock I brought the breakfast tray : coffee, butter, rolls and with the exception of fast days, ham. Only in later years did His Majesty take tea, and that so strong that the entire personal staff could afterwards get very satisfying drinks simply by watering that one portion down. Owing to his splendid constitution the Emperor stood the strong tea excellently, and never experienced even the slightest trace of indigestion.

Between breakfast and lunch, which was at twelve or half-past, the Emperor took nothing to eat except perhaps a few biscuits.

"One ought not to eat so much," he would say.

His Majesty thought it unreasonable to ask for anything in the interval ; indeed, he actually thought that in any case the kitchen would not be able to supply him with anything !

Once, when he was to open the Millennium Exhibition on the 2nd May, 1896, in Budapest, he said that he would find it hard to go from five in the morning to four in the afternoon without anything to eat.

"That is a big order for my stomach," he remarked.

When I advised His Majesty to take, at any rate, a good breakfast at ten o'clock he asked me with astonishment, but with awakening hope :

"Oh, shall I really be able to get something in between ? Will the cook be prepared for it ? "

When the Emperor was staying at Schönbrunn a mounted orderly appeared immediately after breakfast, carrying the famous "red pouch" which contained the documents from the military and cabinet chancelleries.

Daily at nine o'clock the chief *aide-de-camp*, Count Paar, was admitted to audience; he was followed by the Chief of the Military Chancellery, Baron Bolfras, and by the Grand Steward of the Court, Prince Rudolf Liechtenstein. The Grand Master of the Kitchen, Count Wolkenstein, put in an appearance also. Then the Minister had audience of His Majesty, and twice weekly General Audiences were held; but about these I will speak more fully later. If matters in Parliament were very stormy, His Majesty often received one or another of the Ministers, gave him advice, and discussed the situation with him. When the waves of strife grew really high and Ministers handed in their resignations because they knew not what to do, very often the Emperor refused to accept the resignation, but would help them over their difficulties.

Francis Joseph's only wish was to know the truth. The more openly and candidly one spoke with him, the better pleased he was, and the one thing that made him dreadfully angry was to find that matters were being hidden from him. That no one dared to contradict him is merely a fairy-tale. In the bedroom, where I might occasionally permit myself some freedom of speech, I often informed His Majesty of the true state of things, describing public opinion and telling him what was happening in Vienna and amongst the people.

Ordinarily lunch was served after noon. It consisted of soup, beef with vegetables, or steak or poultry ; on rare occasions there was a small *entrée*, but always a glass of Pilsener. As His Majesty took his midday meal at his writing-desk, all the dishes had to be carried from the large, fairly distant kitchen, and this was done by means of two large tin cases provided with handles ; at the bottom was a contrivance with glowing embers, over which stood the saucepans and casseroles, just as they had come out of the oven. The chief cook arrived with the dishes, and put the finishing touches to them in the ante-room adjoining the Emperor's study ; in this room there was a small brick-stove, mainly used for heating the water for His Majesty's morning toilet ; there was also a spirit stove which the royal cook preferred to use whenever, for example, custard had to be freshly made for the sweet course. Indeed, even breakfast was prepared on this stove by the baker.

The luncheon was served by me. The complete meal was laid on a silver tray and placed before His Majesty on the writing-desk. At his right lay the finished, at his left the unfinished documents, and in the middle stood the tray with the midday repast. This was done everywhere, for neither in Vienna nor at Schönbrunn, at Ischl or in Hungary did Francis Joseph allow himself a break at midday.

The *aides* were most inconsiderate of their Emperor's comfort, and very often chose this hour to announce the visits of Ministers with "urgent" reports ; at once His Majesty would lay down his fork, and I should have to take the tray away—

many a time the dishes had hardly been touched. To put an end to this I simply fastened the door into the Adjutants' Office while the Emperor was having his meal, thus once again getting into hot water with the *aide-de-camp*.

The proper dinner at five o'clock was more varied, and when Frau v. Schratt was to be present the Emperor carefully chose her favourite dishes from the menu-card. Even then I generally set a table that had to be pushed from a corner to the centre of the study, or served the meal in a small room adjoining. Although the table-setting was done quite soundlessly, the Emperor always knew what point had been reached in the preparations, and he would stand up to examine the table. This was one of his habits; another was to look at his reflection on the blades of the knives lying before him, no matter where he might be.

After dinner the Emperor generally did not take anything more to eat until the next day. Only at Ischl, where dinner was usually served at three o'clock, did His Majesty take in the evening a soup-plateful of sour milk with black bread and butter.

Right at the beginning of my service a tragi-comic episode took place. Old Hornung, who was frightfully jealous of me, could not be prevented from taking in the tray with the midday meal for His Majesty. Shaking and indignant as he was, the eighty-year-old man stumbled in excess of zeal, the soup-tureen overbalanced, the soup cascaded onto the floor, and the dumplings hopped gracefully over the carpet. Through the door I could hear the horrified Hornung stammer :

"I beg a thousand pardons ! I lay myself at Your Majesty's feet !"

"Not that as well !" parried the Emperor with good-natured sharpness. "There is enough at my feet already with the dumplings."

Ever since my first place with Count Bellegarde I had been accustomed to meticulous attention to every detail, and this again was a thorn in the flesh of my colleagues at the Hofburg. Whenever they could, they put a spoke in my wheel. They were annoyed, too, by the fact that I tried to draw His Majesty out of the quite involuntary state of "splendid isolation" imposed upon him by the Court, by bringing him newspapers and articles which had always been strictly kept from him, and by telling him many things which he otherwise would never have been allowed to hear. That brought me into still greater disfavour with the high and mighty Court officials.

However, the kindness of my revered master more than recompensed such unpleasantnesses. Just when I was to have a fortnight's holiday, His Majesty was due to go to Budapest, and he was obviously rather upset about it.

"When are you going ?" he asked me several times. "Perhaps you could pack all my things before you go ?"

I replied that this could not very well be done, as the clothes would be too badly crushed. That put His Majesty in a still worse mood, but as I myself did not feel quite at ease either, knowing the Emperor to be on the eve of a journey, I came back after only three days off, just in time to go to Budapest too. The Emperor was visibly moved ; perhaps in his

goodness of heart he reproached himself for his egoism—at all events he remarked :

“ Poor Ketterl, you spent more time in the train than in the country ! ”

The service connected with the Emperor's apartments was undertaken by fourteen people, under my supervision. Besides my humble self there were two other valets, two doorkeepers, four loaders, two indoor menservants, and three chambermaids, who came on duty alternately.

His Majesty was very kind to us all and remarkably polite. He never ordered, but always asked that a thing should be done, and invariably thanked the person who even handed him a glass of water. It seldom happened that the Emperor asked for anything to eat or drink in the intervals between the proper meals, for he hardly ever thought of his personal needs. Yet just so much the more did he interest himself in the welfare and care of his servants. If there were differences amongst the staff, or if the servants had any special requests to make, I carried the matter to the Emperor and acted as intermediary.

Nothing escaped the Emperor's sharp eye. As he drove one day through the Castle yard, on the way to Schönbrunn, he passed the guard, the sentries presented arms, dipped the colours in greeting, and the Emperor noticed that one of the infantrymen on duty was without a badge on his *shako*. Immediately on his arrival in Schönbrunn His Majesty ordered the adjutant accompanying him to report the matter at once by telephone to the headquarters of the Castle Guard, with the express injunction that the soldier in question was not to be punished, as the badge might



possibly have fallen from his cap only when he fell into line.

Just as the Emperor noticed the slightest negligence in equipment, so he saw equally quickly if one of his servants looked troubled, as was the case with one of my colleagues, whose son was killed in Russia in 1914, right at the beginning of the Great War. The Emperor asked me what was the matter, and when I told him the reason, His Majesty called the man to him, tried to console him and ordered that a sum of money be handed to him.

At the Court of Austria sympathy and liberality were traditional. Thus every Lifeguardsman on night duty was given a bottle of wine and a loaf of bread ; the Hofburg sentries, selected at different times from various regiments, receiving the same allowance. The officers received an extra allowance of two *gulden*, the rank and file one of forty *kreuzer* ; the officers also received a bottle of wine each, there being a difference between that served to the officers and that given to the men. This ruling dated from the time of Maria Theresa, as did also the custom of giving two measures of beer every evening to the ladies and gentlemen of the suite, although it was usually the servants who were helped to sound slumbers by this so-called "night-cap."

The Emperor tried to make our service as valets as light as possible, and the following anecdote serves to illustrate his humane mode of thought.

One morning when I went in to wake the Emperor he said :

"I didn't sleep a wink all night, but have been walking up and down the room."

I was startled and asked :

“ But why did not Your Majesty call, or ring ? ”

To which the Emperor replied :

“ Because you must have your sleep ! ”

He was like that not only to me, but to all who came into contact with him. If he himself felt well, but knew that his physician, Councillor Kerzl, had a slight cold in the head, His Majesty would say when Kerzl was announced in the morning :

“ Just tell him that I am quite well, and that he had better look after himself ! ”

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There was much bickering and strife regarding the usual distributions to the domestic staff, yet the Emperor was not to blame for it, but rather the Wetschl, Director of the Chancellery Office at Court, who did his best to live up to his nickname of “ Master of Economies.” Whenever and wherever he could he tried to withdraw privileges accorded to the staff, ostensibly to prevent any waste of the imperial possessions. Wetschl wished also to cancel the bottle of wine and the loaf of bread which each of us received every year on the 18th August, the Emperor’s birthday, maintaining that the servants did not use the wine to drink their sovereign’s health, but sold it. Naturally that raised a storm of indignation.

On the 18th August, 1908, the Emperor’s seventy-eighth birthday, I begged His Majesty to allow his chamber staff to congratulate him personally. The Emperor granted this request, and so after breakfast we were all admitted to his presence ; in the name of my colleagues I made a small speech, first of all

expressing our most respectful good wishes. His Majesty was obviously moved and replied :

“I thank you all for your devoted and faithful service to me,” then, turning to me, added, “and you I thank particularly.” With that he stretched out his hand to me first, and I kissed it respectfully.

The domestic staff, however, would have liked to see in addition to the handshake some visible sign of the Emperor’s favour. Again I was the go-between, and informed Count Paar of the servants’ desire ; he passed the news on to the Emperor, whereupon His Majesty ordered the Chief Stewards to obtain watches for the servants. The Stewards’ Department appeared to be of the same mind as the Chancellery Office, and thought that anything, however inferior, was quite good enough for the staff, for the watches were so poor that the men refused them. Again I was the spokesman, and other watches were procured, but the breach was really only repaired by Frau v. Schratt, when at Christmas the same year she presented handsome gold chains to go with the watches—a gift that contented everybody, including me.

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A ruler of Austria—that country *par excellence* of tips—who did not himself tip would have been inconceivable. Now, I myself was in charge of the tipping-funds, which were mostly used for presents to the servants allotted to His Majesty in addition to his personal staff, at manœuvres or on similar occasions. Everyone who served the Emperor in such capacity received from my master’s private purse

three times the amount specified by the pay-office and customary in the district; only gold pieces were given, and I myself obtained them specially for this purpose. Wherever we went—even if we stayed only a few hours in the place—golden rain had to descend on somebody, in the form of gold pieces distributed by me as tips! I well knew how to guard the prestige of the Austrian Imperial Court.

As a matter of fact, everyone at Court was liberal, although in some cases it might be rather from necessity than from desire. For instance, it was customary that a newly appointed Privy Councillor should pay thirty *ducats* to the First Department of the Imperial House in the Foreign Office, the Head of the Department receiving eighteen *ducats*, and the balance being divided between the remaining officials. Further, when the newly appointed Privy Councillor came to the audience at which he was to take the oath, *nolens volens* he was supposed to press two *ducats* into the hand of the footman who placed over his shoulders the cape of office. Knights of the Golden Fleece paid the large sum of one thousand *ducats* to the officials of the Private Chancellery—a custom dating from the time of the Emperor Ferdinand.

It is probably not generally known that the Emperor presented a large casket of *ducats* to each Papal Nuncio on his departure from Vienna; some of the money was used for the Nuncio's travelling expenses, but he still had a very considerable balance to hand over to the Holy See.

Naturally money could not be given to departing ambassadors—they were decorated instead.

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Economical and modest in his personal demands, Francis Joseph was exceedingly liberal where his subordinates were concerned. My sons were educated at the Emperor's private expense for eight years in Kremsmünster, as were also other Court officials' children who were intelligent and anxious to learn. Councillor Chertek, Keeper of the Privy Purse, had to keep himself informed of their behaviour and progress, and to report to His Majesty from time to time. By generous grants and supplementary payments the Emperor helped many young people to study, or had them educated at his expense in the Military Schools. He also aided numberless officers who were in financial straits, and I know that in some cases he even made an additional allowance which enabled a loving couple to be united.

To help those in need who applied to the Private Chancellery or to the Police Headquarters, the Emperor laid aside each month, from his private funds, a minimum sum of sixty thousand crowns—that is about one hundred thousand Austrian shillings (nearly three thousand pounds). He always gave a favourable decision to the appeals lodged by the widows of permanent state, municipal or rural officials, whether submitted verbally or in writing. Further, the Emperor always stood as godfather for twins, triplets or quadruplets; gave maternity grants, made presents on the occasions of silver and golden weddings; and in addition supplied gifts of five hundred crowns—or in some cases much more—when Fire Brigades, Associations, Corporations, Young People's Societies, etc., visited him under the auspices of their respective Town Councils. Those who asked

for an audience in order to plead for a grant to meet damage done by fire, flood or other disasters, received anything up to half a million crowns—all from His Majesty's Privy Purse. How many tears the Emperor dried—how many human beings he set on their feet again !

A slight yet characteristic trait of the Emperor : at Ischl the barber Kusman attended His Majesty, or sometimes sent his assistant, who later took over the business on Kusman's death. Now, the Emperor once wished to take the present owner of the business back to Vienna with him before the end of the season at Ischl ; it never occurred to His Majesty simply to command the man to join his staff, and he therefore asked me how the matter could be arranged. I suggested that the barber be paid compensation for the loss of business at Ischl, mentioning five hundred crowns—a sum considerably greater than the profit likely to be lost by the early closing of the establishment. The next day, in the barber's presence, the Emperor asked me :

“ Didn't I give him too little after all ? ”

I set His Majesty's mind at rest on that score, and the barber's satisfied expression showed me that I had been right in so doing.

Although the Emperor did not ordinarily carry money with him, he, nevertheless, gave a great deal away, and particularly when he went to see Frau v. Schratt at Ischl he had his daily mendicants, to whom he always gave kindly gifts. He would write down on a slip how much money he needed ; I presented the slip to the Court Treasurer and obtained the coins, which I handed over to His Majesty before he set off.

Kind as the Emperor was to his servants and subjects, he could be equally hard and pitiless to persons of a rank more nearly approaching his own, and to members of his own family. The Emperor—who never refused to grant to me, his valet, any wish expressed at the right time and in the right place—was, nevertheless, accustomed to taking strict and intransigent measures against people of high degree. It is, however, a matter of absolute fact that he kept this imperious manner, often so stressed, solely for the audience chamber and for his study. I read in a recently published book the statement that the Emperor considered only members of the baronial and princely houses or of the very oldest noble families as really being in the first rank, and then only when they did not hold State or Court appointments, whilst he mistrusted everybody else. This is an assertion which I certainly cannot make.

His Majesty had himself marvellously under control ; I never saw him moody or irritable, and I never heard him raise his voice. As the “Emperor” he always felt a certain restraint ; his principles as a sovereign would not permit him to relax that control. He always appeared calm and quiet, however upset he might be inwardly. Consequently those in his immediate vicinity could never gauge his moods, and only those of his immediate circle—of which I was one—knew from the tone of his voice, his exact frame of mind ; the brighter he appeared to be, the quieter I myself became, and the harder I tried to make myself inconspicuous.

When ill the Emperor was very self-disciplined, bearing pain without moving a muscle. Once, sitting

on an ordinary chair in his study, and in the interval of signing two documents, he let his dentist, Dr. Günther, draw one of his teeth ; on another occasion he pulled a loose tooth out himself and threw it into the wastepaper-basket, from where I retrieved it later.

His Majesty was always grateful to anyone who could give him good advice, and the trust that he put in me could have been shared by others, had they but approached him with the frankness he desired, yet so rarely found amongst those surrounding him.

Another characteristic of the Emperor was his painful neatness. In Vienna, Schönbrunn, Budapest or Gödöllő, wherever he might be, a small brush and a feather whisk were kept behind the large standing calendar, so that His Majesty might at various times through the day clear from his desk the ash and sand used for drying the ink. It was one of my private entertainments to watch through the open door how the Emperor set his desk in order.

Thus the Emperor's true life was passed only in his study, at his desk.



## CHAPTER IV

### ELISABETH, EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA

**I**T was a curious thing, but to the great masses of our people the imperial couple, Francis Joseph and Elisabeth, were rather ideals than human beings—symbols rather than individuals. Francis Joseph was to his subjects the incarnation of a tireless devotion to duty, whilst Elisabeth stood for royal, almost unearthly beauty and majesty. Although both were very little in touch with the public, Austrian imagination saw in the Emperor the conscientious worker, in the Empress the ideal woman. There is something chilly and prosaic in always doing one's duty, and one may seem to pay more attention to the formalities than to the intrinsic meaning and purpose. Imagination is unreality, far removed from the concrete facts of life, but what wonder if it finally dawned upon the people that the marriage of two so fundamentally and inherently different individuals was anything but happy? At once a host of legends sprang up, glorifying the Empress Elisabeth; from being Empress she became martyr, until at last the public saw in this beautiful woman a lonely ruler, crowned by the halo of unhappiness and suffering. Imagination and her almost unnatural beauty fought for the Empress Elisabeth. The more public opinion criticised Francis Joseph the Emperor, accusing him

of heartlessness, coldness and indifference, the more it dealt kindly with the Empress Elisabeth. It would almost appear that with the stones cast at Francis Joseph it was intended to build a memorial to the Empress !

No one who had once seen the Empress, or heard her speak, could ever forget the charm of her personality. That applied to the Emperor also, and it is completely untrue to say that he did not appreciate his wife, or was too primitive to follow her train of thought. Francis Joseph was a practical man ; Elisabeth a dreamer flying from the world's realities. Her griefs and disappointments arose, not from the fact that Francis Joseph was her husband, but that she was the wife of an Emperor. Not his person but his calling and duties—in part the mere fact that he had a definite range of duties at all—were the obstacles that lay in the path of Elisabeth's happiness.

It is not for me to judge the spiritual qualities of this great woman ; I cannot state whether literature and art were in her life pleasant pastimes or matters of deep import ; neither can I say whether or no she was a good mother, for when I first came to the Court the Heir-Apparent, Archduke Rudolf, had already been dead a long time. I can only tell of Elisabeth the wife, and if—as is necessary—I put aside my personal feelings, my true attachment, admiration and love of the Empress, I must honestly admit that she was very far removed from the ideal consort. Naturally my opinion is of value only if a wife's duties are considered from the human standpoint, common to emperor and valet. I have not the slightest intention of concerning myself with the

tales that appeared in various scandal-mongering Austrian newspapers—which were forbidden at the time—stating that the Empress sought with other aristocrats the happiness that she had not found with Francis Joseph. I can neither confirm nor disprove such stories, and therefore do not pay any attention to them; but if the place of a wife is at her husband's side in joy and in sorrow, if her husband has not merely to arrange for her diversions and to yield to her whims and moods, if the wife of an emperor is doubly and trebly bound to push her personal interests, hobbies and amusements into the background, to help her royal husband in his work and even on occasion to be lenient with his weaknesses—then judged by that standard Elisabeth was an exceedingly bad wife.

Perhaps she would have been an ideal partner at the side of some imaginative poet, painter or artistic nobleman, who felt his duty to be summed up in the words "to live only for her," but she was completely unsuited to a ruler who had to take his duties seriously, had he been as artistic and wise as King Solomon himself.

It is well known that Elisabeth, daughter of Duke Max of Bavaria, born on the 24th December, 1835, and wedded the Emperor Francis Joseph in 1854, when she arrived at Vienna, was received with exceeding coolness by the Austrian aristocracy, the Liechtensteins, Schwarzenbergs, etc. No one took much account of the "little Bavarian Princess"; they scarcely troubled to come and kiss her hand. Yet she was for that very reason the more fêted and welcomed by the ladies of the Hungarian aristocracy.



THE EMPEROR RIDING WITH THE EMPRESS ELISABETH  
From an old drawing.



For her part the Empress loved above all the Hungarians, whose gallant ways, delight in riding, horses, spirited dancing, languishing gipsy airs, and passionate temperaments were so closely allied to her own. She was a rash, almost foolhardy yet accomplished rider, who stormed bareback across the Pussta, and followed the most strenuous hunts. Once even the Emperor reined back from a ditch that she had taken without trouble. As a horsewoman of the *haute école*, and as a trick-rider, she was splendid. In the Court Riding School and in Gödöllő a circus ring was set up, and almost every evening performances accompanied by gipsy music were given. Francis Joseph once said to the Empress Elisabeth's head groom, Hüttemann, who previously had been a circus manager :

"So, the rôles have been given out. The Empress appears this evening as trick-rider ; you are a horseman of the *haute école* and I am the ring-master."

The Empress is also said to have been very good at jumping through hoops, but this I have merely on hearsay, and so cannot vouch for the truth of the statement. Every day the Empress rode two and sometimes three horses to a standstill, and was always accompanied by great hounds, Ulmer and Leonberger, of whom she was very fond. Unfortunately I never saw her on horseback, for when I came to the Court she was no longer permitted to ride. At that time her health was already so affected that her heart could no longer stand the strain of hard riding, and when we visited her for the last time in Kissingen she could only walk very slowly with the Emperor in the hotel gardens, resting every minute

or two on one of the seats or chairs which, on account of her feeble condition, had been placed quite near to each other around the grounds.

Characteristic of Her Majesty's fondness for all things romantic was her love of the gipsies. In Gödöllő a rabble of men, women and children, clad in rags, black with dirt, shunning the light, wandered around; often the Empress would order a whole band of them to be brought into the Castle, where they were given a meal and a good supply of provisions. To show their gratitude the wretches secretly carried off various additional mementoes, and it was always a hard day for us when we were honoured by such guests. Those people would as soon steal as look at a thing. Little wonder that the Emperor had no particular love for this tribe of thieves, and repeatedly ordered that they should not be allowed to camp near the Castle; Elisabeth, however, stood firm, and so it happened that around the Castle of Gödöllő a whole colony of these slippery customers settled.

In order to preserve her slender figure Her Majesty laid down very hard rules for herself, and ran about for hours in the mountains. I mean that she literally ran. By her side panted a Lady-in-Waiting, and behind came a footman; as the Empress quickened her furious pace every minute or two she threw off cloak, jacket, shawl or fur, and it was the footman's duty to pick up the various articles of attire as Her Majesty dropped them, and carry them after her. She had herself weighed every day, and if she had put on a couple of ounces rigorous limitations of diet at once came into force. In order to remain slim she

took a soup which, prepared from beef, fowls, roe and woodcock, made an extract stronger than the strongest broth. Her Majesty was upheld in this "beauty treatment" by her two attendants, the *Fraulein* Meissl and the *Fraulein* Hennige. The domestic staff also told me that the Empress, knowing that her wonderful figure showed to advantage on horseback, always let her tailor sew her into her habit before mounting.

At the Zoo in Lainz Her Majesty preferred to take her walks in the space railed off for the wild boars, and in order to scare them from her path she always took a rattle with her, for the sows are very savage and bad-tempered at breeding time.

. . . . .

One day at Cap Martin the Emperor saw a bottle containing some red liquid; when he enquired what it was, he was told that it was the juices pressed from six kilogrammes of beef—the sole nourishment the Empress would take that day, as she had overstepped her weight by three ounces.

"Dreadful!" said His Majesty, shaking his head.

The care of Her Majesty's fabulously beautiful, very long hair was a great matter, and its washing developed into quite an affair of State, for in addition to a number of yolks of eggs twenty bottles of the best French brandy were also used every time. Once the Emperor was looking for his wife at Cap Martin, but could not find her anywhere, although he knew that she was having her hair washed.

"Well, wherever does she have her head washed?" he asked at length.



“In the dining hall.”

It was the only place that seemed large enough for the purpose.

The Empress was not too pleasant to the Emperor, and it often appeared as though she tried to annoy him in every way possible, although Francis Joseph always bore himself with consummate gallantry. When she was staying in Vienna he would send a messenger every hour or two to enquire how she was, but when he visited her she used to have all the windows and doors opened in the rooms through which he had to pass, although she knew that her husband hated a draught. So when the Emperor paid her a call he always took his “house cap” with him, and put it on when he was with her; often he was so cold that he kept his cloak on as well. Frau v. Schratt then had a warm cape made which His Majesty could throw on over his coat, and this wrap generally hung in the Empress Elisabeth’s apartments.

The bedroom of Her Majesty in the Vienna Hofburg reminded one by its size of a ballroom, and one can get an idea of its spaciousness by considering the fact that it was heated by two stoves and a fireplace. The bed stood isolated in the centre of the floor.

In Gödöllő the Emperor very rarely saw his wife, although they were under the same roof. If Francis Joseph wished to visit her in the morning, and went without being announced, Her Majesty’s attendants would tell him that the Empress was still sleeping; sometimes the noble lady was already in the mountains, whence she only returned in the evening with her hapless Lady-in-Waiting, and would then certainly not receive the Emperor when she was



THE EMPRESS ELISABETH OF AUSTRIA

*From a painting by Horowitz made in 1874*



exhausted. Thus it would sometimes happen that the Emperor would go to visit her ten days in succession, and yet never be received. I often pitied my illustrious master with all my heart.

One day an unsightly rash broke out on Her Majesty's face ; in order to shield herself from the public she ordered high hoardings to be placed round the royal gardens adjoining the Hofburg, and from that time onwards always held a fan before her face. Previously she had always liked to show herself to the people in all her radiant and fascinating beauty—anyone who ever saw her will remember her always.

On her doctor's advice, and in accordance with the Emperor's wish, Her Majesty took a trip to Madeira after this illness. From that time onwards she was never still, but went on long journeys, wandering restlessly from one place to another ; only on stormy sea voyages did she appear content, and during one frightfully rough and boisterous crossing to Algiers she had herself lashed to the mast in order the better to enjoy the glorious yet terrible spectacle of the raging sea.

On the French Riviera the Empress was particularly popular. Her murder aroused great horror, and in the park of the hotel at Cap Martin stands a memorial obelisk that is always decorated with her favourite flowers, violets and pansies. This monument was unveiled and consecrated by the Archbishop of Nice on the 6th April, 1899, whilst the band played the Austrian National Anthem.

Her Majesty's tragic death is well known. On the 10th September, 1898, an Italian anarchist named Luigi Luccheni stabbed her to the heart with an iron

file in Geneva. This strong-willed and energetic woman recovered herself, and managed with firm step to walk some hundred *metres* further before she fell unconscious, to die a few seconds later from internal bleeding.

When the Emperor heard the news of her death he said to Count Paar, in my presence :

“ No one knows what that woman was to me ! ”

At the time we were about to set off for the manœuvres at Leutschau in Hungary ; I don't know what it was, but even while packing I was inexplicably worried. I was just about to hand over the luggage to the house-porter in the Hofburg, preparatory to going to the station to inspect the coach, when the man said :

“ His Excellency Bolfras has had his luggage fetched back.”

A moment later I, too, received the order to go without delay to His Majesty at Schönbrunn, being told that a carriage was waiting for me. In the meantime I had already heard what had happened. As quickly as possible, clad in my uniform tunic, I hurried to Schönbrunn, slipped into my tail-coat and went in to the Emperor. The Archduchess Valerie was already sitting with His Majesty, who received me with the words :

“ The Empress is dead ! ”

. . . . .

Since then I have never heard the Emperor mention the Empress again. He is also said never to have spoken of the Crown Prince after Rudolf's death. Many suggest that the explanation of this remarkable

fact is that Francis Joseph did not wish to disturb even the memory of what could not be altered ; others again thought that it was due to egoism and lack of feeling. I, however, think that His Majesty was ashamed to show what he felt, afraid that any expression of grief might be taken as a sign of weakness, for I often surprised the Emperor gazing with profound sadness at the portrait of the Empress, who seemed to be greeting him graciously from the easel that stood near to his desk.

## CHAPTER V

### THE EMPEROR, HIS FAMILY AND HIS SURROUNDINGS

THE Emperor Francis Joseph was not only the most industrious worker, but also the first gentleman in the kingdom—a very gallant knight. This showed itself amongst other things in His Majesty's treatment of his domestic staff. He never gave orders, but always asked that a service be performed, then thanked the person handing him what he wanted, or announcing that the request had duly been carried out. The soldiers posted on the stairs leading to the imperial apartments he thanked, when they saluted him according to regulations, by bowing with head uncovered—uncovered because the Emperor never entered the living-rooms with his cap on his head. He walked even through my service-room with his cap in his hand, and could not be induced to wear his plumed hat when in gala uniform, even when passing through the cold halls of the Castle.

When conversing with gentlemen, for example ministers, who had been granted an audience, the Emperor always showed those marks of consideration for which his suite so often had the opportunity to praise him; if talking outside with a man who respectfully removed his hat, Francis Joseph always told him to put it on again. His Majesty demanded

no formalities from his servants within his own four walls when duties were to be performed ; if he went through his apartments first thing in the morning when the servants were cleaning the room, they were not expected to take any notice of him at all ; true, the Emperor was not saluted, but neither was the work interrupted even for a minute.

I have already mentioned that the Emperor, with his Spartan simplicity and inborn aptitude for economy, could reckon very well, and did. Generous as he was on the one hand, he could be just as angry over expenditure that he considered unreasonable and superfluous. For example, His Majesty grumbled to the Empress that she left her yacht *Miramar* always under steam wherever she was, irrespective of whether a voyage was planned or not. It pleased the Empress to feel that she could set off at a moment's notice, but that was a thing the Emperor could not appreciate, and he declared that it was foolish waste. Neither did he agree with the building of Castle Achilleion on Corfu ; the cost of erection appeared to him enormous, and it may very well be that the people employed in the building, feeling themselves well out of range and without supervision, chalked up their expenses rather heavily, or at least did not economise. In short, there was a hard fight before the Emperor paid the bill !

Frau v. Schratt also seemed to His Majesty too free-handed as regards money matters, and I have heard that funds slipped very easily through her fingers—particularly in Monte Carlo. Thus Her Majesty and Frau v. Schratt were the two dark fixed stars on the Emperor's financial horizon.



Francis Joseph was equally anxious that State expenses should be kept down; if reports caused him to think that this was not the case, he at once seized his pen, and I could see him reckoning everything out, then shaking his head. . . .

The following story is very characteristic of him : Once when a report came in from the Austrian Ambassador, Count Franz Zichy, who in order to put himself in a good light stated that he had gone on a pleasure cruise through the Golden Horn on an Austrian vessel, accompanied by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Majesty—so I am told—wrote in the margin, “ Who paid for the coal ? ”

It was also very difficult to induce the Emperor to spend anything on his own health. His Majesty, who suffered from bronchial catarrh, ought to have inhaled ; primitive, as was everything in the Hofburg, hot water was brought in a pan, so that he might inhale by stooping over it while I covered his head with a cloth ! Each time he grew vexed, saying, “ But I can’t breathe at all this way,” yet in spite of that it was only after repeated representations on my part that I was permitted to buy proper apparatus.

Exactly the same thing happened when Councillor Dr. Kerzl prescribed hot-air treatment for His Majesty, who had strained himself at the manœuvres. The Doctor and I racked our brains for a long time trying to think how the hot air was to be produced, until I had the happy thought of procuring a hair-drying apparatus through the barber.

How unassuming His Majesty was could be seen from the furnishing of his apartments. The study faced south, was flooded with sunshine, and during

the summer the Emperor suffered greatly from the heat; to freshen the room something was needed that would artificially produce a current of air, but when we showed His Majesty an electric fan he merely said :

“ Very pretty, and really extraordinarily practical ; that apparatus must be installed at once in the apartments of the Empress and of the Archduchess Valerie.”

When I allowed myself to suggest, “ And for Your Majesty ? ” the Emperor replied with one word, “ Superfluous ! ”

It took days of endeavour before that single word “ superfluous ” was withdrawn. Frau v. Schratt procured the “ little wind-wheel ” and Director-General Palmer smuggled it into the Emperor’s room, holding it as if it were a bouquet ; he then presented it to His Majesty, who smilingly accepted the gift, only threatening the donor jokingly with finger raised.

Nevertheless, it is not correct to say that His Majesty on principle refused to change from old-fashioned methods. Rather was it the endeavour of his entourage to keep everything modern away from the Emperor, for I repeatedly found that he gave earnest consideration to any new proposals that might be made to him, although, like all elderly people, he did not easily accustom himself to alterations.

How truly considerate the Emperor was for his officials is shown by the following incident : when in the spring he had left the Hofburg for Schönbrunn, half an hour away, and Ministers or other function-

aries had something to report, His Majesty would himself drive back to the Castle in order to save such gentlemen the time, and the journey, to Schönbrunn.

One read sometimes in the newspapers that the Emperor was very annoyed if anyone appeared in his presence dressed otherwise than in a frock-coat, but that is not true at all. Certainly Ministers appeared before him clad thus, but on his morning visit Councillor Dr. Kerzl always wore a lounge or morning suit, for he donned uniform only on official occasions, and is reported never to have owned a dress-suit! Further, if the Emperor happened to call me at night I was permitted to enter his bedroom in any state of undress, say, in my trousers, with a coat thrown over my shoulders, and carpet slippers on my feet. "Night-duty" there was none. Indeed, it simply amused the Court officials to appear before His Majesty in the most primitive of toilets if he sent for them in the early hours of the morning; they knew that the Emperor took the time into consideration, and they liked to carry out his order that they "were to come quickly, as they were," as literally as ever possible. And so it often happened that Heads of Departments and Court Secretaries appeared in His Majesty's presence in nightshirts with cloaks draped picturesquely around them.

The Emperor's zeal for work was proverbial. On the very day of his death, though shaking with fever, he sat down at his desk, and only put his pen aside—it was seven o'clock in the evening—to stretch himself on what proved to be his deathbed.

In Vienna, abroad, in the train or at the manœuvres, whilst others still enjoyed sweet morning slumbers,

the Emperor had already some hours' work behind him. He rose at half-past three in the morning, and the moment he was dressed and had offered up his morning prayer he could be seen hard at work at his desk.

The great extent of the kingdom—stretching from the Swiss frontier to the steppes of Russia, from the blue Adriatic to the mountains of Silesia, and necessitating administration and government on a huge scale—naturally made it impossible for His Majesty to attend to all a sovereign's duties during his daily work in his study, but he was anxious to do all that lay in his power and that he felt to be his duty.

Punctual to a second himself, the Emperor worked just as strictly and exactly to his schedule of work. A life without duties did not appeal to His Majesty at all, for he found both entertainment and pleasure in toil; he who lacked the gift of amusing himself with his circle or busying himself with creative hobbies, found in work distraction and a kind of relief from the many cares of State which were laid upon his shoulders, as well as from the misfortunes which time and time again cast a shadow of gloom over his private life.

Francis Joseph never allowed himself a real holiday, for he worked as hard on his hunting trips as he did in Vienna. The Emperor could not endure arrears, and as the documents placed on his desk in the morning had to be finished the same day, it was not easy for the responsible officials to put before him the exact amount of work—neither more nor less—that he could get through, taking the day's appointments into consideration. When receptions and

audiences were to be held, or family affairs claimed His Majesty's attention, the number of documents had to be reduced in proportion, but sometimes it happened that the Emperor finished his work before "his time was up," and then he would ask for more. . . . Often on Sunday afternoons I had to send for still more work from the Chancellery Cabinet.

His Majesty himself made no difference between working and recreation hours—and expected other people to feel the same way. As an example : when the Emperor was staying in Ischl the Chief of the Cabinet, Schiessl, always had leave too, but it once happened that he had the unfortunate idea of spending his holiday in Ischl, where he met His Majesty out walking.

"What are you doing here ?" asked the Emperor.

When the Minister replied that he was spending his leave there, His Majesty remarked :

"Ah, then you might just as well stay at the villa with me, and have your meals there too." And that was what happened—to Schiessl's intense dismay, for it meant neither more nor less than working exactly as hard as in Vienna, Francis Joseph evidently holding the opinion that for a Cabinet Minister, also, the mere fact of staying in Ischl signified a "holiday."

From the time of the Crimean War Francis Joseph attended personally to practically all the Foreign Office documents, and this often led to great complications. His Majesty once prepared a report intended for the Austrian Ambassador in London, Count Deym, which was signed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Goluchowski. Count Deym did not agree with the contents, but was aware that in spite of the

signature it was really the Emperor himself who had drawn up the documents in question ; consequently he voiced his objections to the opinions ostensibly held by the "Ministry" in a letter to Count Paar, whom he asked to obtain the Emperor's consent to the alterations he (the Ambassador) proposed. This was done, for when Count Paar, apparently falling in with the Ambassador's idea, laid the original letter before His Majesty, Francis Joseph drew up a fresh report in accordance with Count Deym's wishes.

The Emperor handled his Ministers as a business man handles his employees. The Empress once said, *à propos* of the sudden resignation of a Hungarian Minister :

"The Emperor holds each Minister until he chooses to let him drop, yet in spite of that if he needed four hundred Ministers he could get eight hundred !"

Except for Count Taaffe, who remained for seventeen years at the head of the Austrian Government and had been the Emperor's boyhood playmate, and old Count Koloman Tisza, the Emperor felt no particular interest in any other Minister. Ministers always appeared before His Majesty in dress-clothes with white ties, and only when one had a long report to make that necessitated reference to his papers did the Emperor invite him to sit down ; otherwise they almost stood to attention. His Majesty never shook hands with his Ministers, save when one was sworn in or paid his farewell visit at the expiration of his term of office.

Neither did His Majesty ever shelter himself behind ministerial responsibility ; even in the darkest times he, as Head of the State and Ruler, stepped courage-

ously into the breach. If a Minister found himself in a blind alley and did not know what to do next it was Francis Joseph who encouraged him and helped him out of the difficulty. Readily and zealously—even with visible pleasure not untempered by a slightly malicious joy—he would sometimes point out an error to a Minister, his splendid memory, wide experience and sound knowledge of home and foreign affairs proving of the utmost value.

The Emperor hated the cult of secrecy that reigned at Court, for he was a seeker after truth. More than once I saw that he grew very angry when anything was held back from him, whereas he was satisfied to hear the unvarnished truth, even if somewhat brutally expressed. The height of his ambition was to strive honourably for the good of his subjects and his country, without neglecting anything, doing all that lay in his power conscientiously and to the very best of his ability.

Consequently I am the more astonished that trust in such a ruler was less than the belief in the policy of secrecy, and that there were still men at the Court who thought that it was necessary to hide from His Majesty anything unpleasant, endeavouring always to paint the situation both at home and abroad only in the rosiest of colours. Very often it was I who, in the privacy of his bedroom, told the Emperor the plain truth; I, his valet, who showed him how matters really stood, and described the people's moods to the best of my knowledge.

As already mentioned, even on hunting trips the Emperor never abstained from pressing work. For instance, if a fine stag were signalled at Ischl, His

Majesty never set out stalking until he had attended to all the documents in his possession. Coolly, and to all seeming dispassionately, he weighed stag and State documents one against the other, his clear reasoning power and sense of duty deciding the question. "The stag will be there to-morrow too," he would say, well aware that important matters could not be left over, and thus the verdict was given against the pleasures of the chase.

. . . . .

Many misfortunes befell the Emperor's family. His brother, Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, was shot in 1867 by order of the Mexican rebel leaders; his other brother, Ludwig Viktor—not being quite normal—was exiled from the Court. His Majesty's only son, Crown Prince Rudolf, died tragically, and the following may be given from among the various versions of the drama.

Rudolf wished to be separated from Stephanie, with whom he did not live happily, and informed the Emperor of his desire; it is said that during this agitating interview His Majesty fainted for the first and only time in his life. The Crown Prince had already applied to the Pope for the marriage to be annulled, and the Holy Father, in conjunction with the Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla, decided to allow Rudolf of Austria's claim for divorce on the grounds of canonical law, the Crown Prince having stated that he could have no heir by his wife. Perhaps Rudolf would not have had recourse to this assertion if Stephanie had understood how to retain her hold upon his affections, but as things were he



turned to Baroness Mary Vetsera, who by her ready wit and charm aroused his interest.

When Stephanie heard of Rudolf's intentions she at once informed her father, King Leopold of Belgium, who communicated with Queen Victoria of England; she in her turn applied to the Emperor Wilhelm I, and all these crowned heads, joined also by the old King of Sweden, proceeded to do everything in their power to uphold Stephanie and save the marriage.

There was a moving scene between father and son when His Majesty commanded the Crown Prince to break with Baroness Mary Vetsera, with the alternative of being expelled from the House of Habsburg. Rudolf, his love for Mary Vetsera already somewhat cooled by the difficulties encountered, promised to end the liaison. When Mary Vetsera heard of his decision, she begged him to come to her just once again, so Rudolf resolved to see her for the last time at Mayerling.

Meanwhile Rudolf, who never remained faithful to any woman, had seen at Mayerling the very beautiful wife of one of the royal foresters, Bauer, and was greatly taken with her, although the forester had repeatedly warned him: "Your Highness, leave my wife alone, or there will be trouble!"

Rudolf is said to have parted from Mary Vetsera and to have gone, at night, to the forester's wife. What happened then, no man knows. . . . At any rate, Rudolf was found, with terrible head-wounds, lying dead at the foot of a tree in the forest. At the same time, unconnected with the Prince's fate, the forsaken Baroness Mary Vetsera ended her life in the hunting lodge at Mayerling.

The wildest rumours arose, and as the forester himself was never seen again, imagination was allowed free play. The old widow of a Major-General told me that she had seen the Crown Prince immediately after the disaster became known. He was lying on the bed, his hands—on which gloves had been placed—lying clenched upon his breast, near to one another. His unbandaged head showed a terrible wound, the skull having been battered in. After the autopsy Professor Widerhofer and the Crown Princess Stephanie's physician, Dr. Auchenthaler, had to sign a protocol ; it is said that Professor Widerhofer signed it without question, but that Dr. Auchenthaler objected to doing so.

After the Crown Prince's death the Emperor, bowed down by grief, sent to the Holy Father in Rome a telegram three hundred lines long, the text of which, despite many efforts, has never been ascertained ; the draft of the telegram was lost a few years ago in a fire at a Bohemian castle, in which all the private documents were entirely destroyed, whilst the message received by the Pope lies in the private files at the Vatican and naturally cannot be seen.

It was night when the Crown Prince's body was brought from Mayerling to Vienna ; within the city the Viennese Household Guards lined the route, and behind the black-draped gun-carriage strode a solitary figure—the stricken Emperor. It must have been a touching sight. Doubtless His Majesty often thought of his dead son, but Francis Joseph was a man who seemed to live only in the present, never mentioning things which were past or properly belonged to the

past, and so he never spoke of the dead Crown Prince again. . . .

Amongst the misfortunes which overtook the family must be reckoned the dreadful death of the Emperor's beautiful sister-in-law, the Duchess d'Alençon—once the betrothed of that almost legendary King Ludwig II of Bavaria—who was killed in a terrible fire which destroyed a charity bazaar in Paris, but perhaps the greatest tragedy of all was the assassination in 1898 of the Empress Elisabeth in Geneva. The Heir to the Throne, Francis Ferdinand, and his brave wife Sophie, were laid low by an assassin's bullets in 1914 in Serajevo, whilst the Heir-Apparent's brother, the "Handsome Otto," died the victim of a malignant disease. This unfortunate Prince was one of the most energetic and smartest of all the Austrian cavalry officers in the kingdom, and in addition a very talented artist. In Budapest there is an oil-painting of his, depicting a Hussar feeding his horse with bread dipped in wine. At family dinners there was always keen competition for the splendid caricatures which Archduke Otto skilfully sketched on the backs of the menu-cards. His comments, and his manner of entertaining the illustrious guests at table, were so humorous that the footmen serving had the utmost difficulty not to laugh too. The Emperor, who was very fond of the Archduke, attributed Otto's many mad escapades to the youthful folly of "the Hussar" who was so much run after by all the beautiful women, though there were times when "Handsome Otto" went a bit too far. As, for instance, when he was taking supper at Sacher's, the famous restaurant patronised

by the élite of Vienna : having reached the stage when he was no longer conscious of his actions, the Archduke wandered into the corridor very scantily clad—in fact, with nothing on but his sword, which was buckled round his waist. Unfortunately he ran right into the arms of the wife of a British peer. One can easily imagine the horror and fright of the super-prudish Englishwoman. At the sight of the belted “Adam” she nearly fainted. The next morning the Englishman, boiling with indignation, called upon the Minister for Foreign Affairs, complained of the Archduke’s conduct, and demanded that the matter be placed before His Majesty. This the Minister declined to do, and the Lord had no better luck with the Chief Steward or the Chief of Police. Finally he himself asked for an audience, and described to the Emperor the exceedingly painful occurrence. The result was that the Archduke Otto was confined to quarters for two months—at a monastery in Upper Austria. This forced monastic sojourn passed off without particular tragedy, the only thing that suffered being the cellar, for when the august prisoner was once more sent out into the world the reverend gentlemen’s stocks of wine were sadly depleted !

Archduke Otto died of an infectious disease, and was nursed to the very end by his devoted wife, the Archduchess Maria Josefa.

The third of Otto’s brothers, Ferdinand Karl, who lived in Meran, later took the name of “Ferdinand Burg.” He fell in love with the pretty daughter of Professor Zuber, and married her. Called upon by the Emperor to report, and asked whether he really were married, the Archduke, in deadly fear, stam-

mered out, "No." After that the Emperor had nothing more to do with him, for His Majesty could not bear anyone to lie. Ferdinand Karl grieved; in addition to that he suffered from weak lungs, and later took to drink, for as Busch says, "for him who has sorrow there is also liquor," dying at last forgotten and unnoticed at his castle at Rottenstein in the Tyrol.

His Majesty also had much trouble with the Tuscan branch of his family. Luise, wife of the Saxon Crown Prince August, left her husband and disappeared with Giron, a French teacher of languages. Her brother Leopold was an outsider, who carried on various businesses under the style of "Leopold Wölfling," and is now the proprietor of a green-grocery store. Archduke Joseph was responsible for the catastrophe at Luck during the Great War. Even before the War he wanted to be hail-fellow-well-met with all and sundry, exuded false graciousness, and was anxious to be "popular" with the Army. As Commander of the Fourth Army he advanced on his own responsibility near Krasnik, thus causing a disaster that had to be made good by the German Army Council. Next he fancied himself in the rôles of hunter and fisherman in the forests of Wolhynia and on the Stryj, and ordered the temporary bridges to be torn down merely because they hindered the use of his canoe on hunting trips! Unconcernedly he amused himself before the enemy; until on the 4th July, 1917, the Russian storm broke loose, when his troops were decimated, and the whole Army Corps cut off, because there were no bridges over the Stryj over which the troops could retire. The



THE EMPEROR WITH HIS FAMILY



Russian attack went through, and the dreadful gap had to be filled by German reserves, removed for this purpose from other important work; 250,000 Austrian soldiers were taken prisoner; 250,000 dead covered the battlefield. The Archduke was relieved of his command and travelled to Vienna to plead his cause, but the Emperor forbade his entry into the capital, banishing him to Salzburg. After the crash the Archduke at once announced his allegiance to the Republicans; he now calls himself Joseph Habsburg, and lives somewhere near one of the Austrian lakes.

The other brother, Peter Ferdinand, distinguished himself in the Great War by the fact that at the battle of Komarow he was within an ace of imperilling General Auffenberg's certain victory.

The ablest and most capable of the Tuscan Archdukes was Johann, but he too fell into disfavour, being considered one of the "new lot." Johann Salvator and Crown Prince Rudolf were thought at the Court to be almost "rebels," although really both wanted to do their best. Various writings, especially the work *Drill or Education*, made Archduke Johann Salvator much disliked. He understood a great deal about soldiering, but that, in itself, was like a red rag to a bull to people like the Austrian "Chief of General Staff of the United Forces," Count Beck. At one of the autumn manœuvres the Archduke led a night attack in such a way that the enemy would have had to submit, had it been a case of real war; yet at the end he got a most thorough dressing-down from the Emperor himself, because this action was not in accordance with the plans made for the manœuvres! Angrily the Archduke abdicated from



his high office, took the name of "Johann Orth" from his Castle of Orth near Gmunden, fitted out a yacht, and was lost with his ship, the *Santa Margareta*, on the coast of South America.

Relations between the Emperor and the Heir-Apparent, Francis Ferdinand, were most strained; each was "afraid" of the other, and interviews between the two were usually in the nature of thunder-storms.

With the remaining members of his family the Emperor lived on a more or less strained footing. His brother, Ludwig Viktor, he never received at all; to the Archduke Friedrich he remained unapproachable, for he hated the commercial element that he considered incompatible with the Archduke's high position.

Once when there was a family "dinner" at the Court, in honour of the Queen of Portugal, with a gala-performance at the Castle Theatre in Schönbrunn to follow, Archduke Otto, in the very tight-fitting Hussars' uniform, was walking in front of Archduke Friedrich, who gave him a smack on his seat that sounded like a pistol-shot! The Emperor jumped violently, gazing in expostulatory fashion at Archduke Friedrich until he recognised the cause of the explosion, whilst the Queen of Portugal, on His Majesty's arm, found it difficult to hide her amusement.

Neither was the husband of his daughter, Archduchess Valerie, namely, Archduke Franz Salvator, a favourite of the Emperor.

His Majesty only received Archduke Eugen "on duty," yet this Master of the Teutonic Order was

considered to be a man who undeniably thought and acted for himself, and was no figurehead with gestures merely learned for the occasion.

On the other hand, Francis Joseph thought a great deal of his son-in-law, Prince Leopold of Bavaria, who was the Emperor's dearest guest and hunting companion. Like his father, the honoured Prince-Regent Luitpold, Prince Leopold was a hunter through and through, and had proved himself a fearless tracker of lions, rhinoceroses and tigers. His personal bravery he revealed in the Franco-Prussian War, when, as Chief of a Battery, he withstood the attacks of the French Army of the Loire, although there were only four guns in working order, and he, himself, was wounded. At Vilpion, on the 1st December, 1870, he repulsed the onslaught of the death-defying troops of the French General Jaurès. For this outstanding feat of arms the Prince received the highest Bavarian award for valour, the Max-Josef Military Medal.

When anyone received the Order of the Golden Fleece it was the habit of the recipient to hand over a thousand *ducats*, which did not flow into the coffers of the Order, but were divided amongst the members of the Household Chancellery. When Prince Georg, the eldest son of Prince Leopold, was invested with this Order of the Golden Fleece, his father, whose purse was always light, asked the *aide-de-camp*, Count Paar, at a dinner in Gödöllő, to remind Francis Joseph of His Majesty's promise to pay the thousand *ducats* from the royal coffers. Prince Georg served as a regular officer with the First Regiment of the Royal Bavarian Heavy Cavalry, and married in 1912 Archduchess Maria Isabella, daughter of Archduke

Friedrich. Now the Prince appears to have known a good deal about riding, but less than nothing about marriage. At any rate, he had not the faintest idea of marital duties, and the union was subsequently declared by the Pope to be null and void, not having been consummated. After the War the Prince entered the Church. His younger brother, Konrad, is married to a Princess of Savoy.

Princess Gisela, wife of Prince Leopold, always knew how to entertain her father well. She was a sprightly and witty conversationalist—a thing which cannot be said for the Emperor's other daughter, Archduchess Maria Valerie, who would sit for hours knitting, yawning or sighing, without speaking a word, until the Emperor, when he could stand it no longer, would give her a broad hint by remarking, "And now I must really get to work."

During the time when there was no electric light in the Hofburg, but only candles, the huge chandeliers in the various apartments—each suite often containing many rooms—were supplied daily with fresh candles, irrespective of whether those from the previous day had been lighted—let alone burned. The "lamp-cleaner" came round as a matter of course and put in fresh candles, and Princess Gisela, famed as a thrifty housewife, was in the habit of packing up the partly-used or even the untouched candles, intended for her apartments, and taking them back with her to Munich.

The Emperor was also very fond of his granddaughter, Countess Seefrid. Her elopement and secret marriage with the then Lieutenant of the Emperor's Own Royal Bavarian Infantry Regiment,

Baron Otto v. Seefrid, made a great stir at the time. His Majesty, however, took a lenient view of the matter and showed himself well-disposed towards her husband as well. The Seefrids are a very ancient Frankish family; Otto's father was Commandant of the Second King's Bavarian Uhlan Regiment; one brother fell in the World War, and the other, Philipp, is Head of the Riding School in Hanover.

Often Countess Elisabeth would sit in my service room, waiting to see whether she could go in to her grandfather. Then, if the Emperor came in by chance, he would ask affectionately:

"Well now, why are you sitting here instead of coming in to see me?"

Regarding the children of the Archduchess Valerie, she might well have paraphrased the Biblical sentence to "happy is the woman who hath her quiver full of them." When they were small they were always tumbling about on the carpet in "Grandpapa's" study. He gave them used envelopes and coloured pencils, with which they scribbled all kinds of funny little figures on the paper. When the Emperor made his accustomed speech of dismissal, "and now I must really get to work," the little ones all handed the coloured pencils tidily back, said "*Adieu*, Grandpapa!" and departed.

At Ischl the Emperor played with the children in the garden just like an ordinary grandfather, or went up to their room in the morning. Sometimes the children went to him. I must say that His Majesty made a charming grandfather; as soon as the children could eat alone they were allowed to have meals with him in the study—often eight of them.

All members of the family addressed the Emperor as "Du" (thou), adding, however—except his daughters—the words "Your Majesty." The Emperor called them all by their Christian names only. In the presence of strangers the Emperor's daughters too addressed him as "Your Majesty."

One of the footmen waiting at table told me an interesting little story. Archduchess Valerie, who was sitting next to the Emperor at dinner, took a whole plateful of cabbage with her beef. Obviously astonished His Majesty watched her as she went on ladling it out. At last he said :

"What ! Are you going to eat all that cabbage ? Do you know, cabbage is the one thing that I cannot even sniff comfortably, for when I was little and once left some cabbage on my plate, I was punished by having cabbage every day for a week. I was brought up that way . . ." and the Emperor looked meaningfully across at Princess Gisela, who went very red . . . "but, of course, nowadays children are brought up quite differently." For His Majesty did not agree in the slightest with the "modern" upbringing of his Bavarian grandchildren.

. . . . .

The widowed Crown Princess Stephanie did not enjoy the Emperor's favour. In the first place she was the daughter of King Leopold of Belgium, who was not loved by our Emperor, and secondly, he could not hold her entirely without responsibility for the disastrous turn and the tragic ending of the episode that cost the Crown Prince his life. She does not seem to have sorrowed too much for her husband,

even though it had been a *grande passion*; which it certainly was, for when Stephanie yielded her heart at the first assault to the Austrian Emperor's handsome son—who telegraphed the news of his success in the words, "*Veni, vidi, vici*"—Rudolf had fallen just as deeply in love with the beautiful blonde princess. Unfortunately husband and wife became estranged very soon after the birth of their first child, little Elisabeth, and an operation undergone by the Crown Princess put and end to any hope of further offspring.

In addition the Crown Princess was not on the same mental level as her husband, being of a harder, more primitive nature. Her little daughter Elisabeth grew into an enchanting, spoiled little princess, a favourite of her grandfather, who forgave her many a roguish trick. The royal physician, Dr. Kerzl, told me more than one amusing tale.

What Princess Elisabeth once took it into her head to want, simply had to be done, and it was just the same later when she decided that she would marry an exceedingly handsome officer, Prince Otto Windischgrätz. He was "commanded" to wed her, but I can no longer remember whether or no he thanked the Emperor at the private audience for the "merciful sentence." The marriage was most unhappy, and later was legally ended. Custody of the children was given to the father, but the Princess—who went over to the Social-Democrats when the crash came—mobilised the workmen when the children were to be taken from her, and thus managed to evade the law's ruling. Even to-day there is some connection between her and a Socialist lawyer. One of her

sons is a chauffeur in Vienna, the other an iron-worker.

The so-called "family dinners" were terribly stiff affairs, at which the atmosphere was always exceedingly strained. The Emperor liked only a few of his relations; he quite rightly considered that many of them acted incorrectly, yet he could not interfere with any show of right; consequently he did not want to see some members of his family at all, others only as seldom as possible, and so by degrees these reunions were dropped altogether.

After Her Majesty's death the Archduchess of highest rank presided at the family dinners; first, Archduchess Maria Theresa; then, when her husband Archduke Karl Ludwig died, Archduchess Maria Josefa took over the housewifely duty until the Emperor passed away.

Maria Theresa, daughter of Duke Miguel of Braganza and Princess Adelheid zu Löwenstein, was a woman who looked as if she had been born to be an Empress. With her inherently noble disposition she was on a friendly footing also with themorganatic wife of her stepson, Archduke Ferdinand Karl—"Mr. Karl Burg."

## CHAPTER VI

### COURT OFFICIALS

IN the chapter on "My Work" I have already mentioned that I always met with the most violent opposition from the officials at Court when I endeavoured to look after the Emperor's personal interests, for the gentlemen bothered themselves very little as to whether their "orders" suited His Majesty or not, being in the habit of acting in a most autocratic manner with an eye to their own convenience.

For example, when my illustrious master was travelling, every little detail, down to the hour at which he was to be shaved, was planned exactly; such plans were made simply as it suited the Court officials and servants, whilst His Majesty, evidently thinking that nothing could be done about it, never thought of vetoing any proposal. If he was going to Budapest he had to set off at eight in the evening in order to get to his destination at six in the morning, and the train stood for some hours on a siding so that it should not get there too soon. The grounds for this arrangement were of a personal nature—though they had nothing to do with the Emperor's person! His Majesty once grew puzzled about this, and asked me why if he was going to Budapest he was twelve hours *en route*, whereas the Grand-Duke Michael



Michailowitsch had, but a short time before, needed only four hours for the same journey. I smilingly opined that in this case it was certain that "allowance" played a by no means unimportant part.

I was instrumental in having a thorough change made, and from that time His Majesty, too, went from Vienna to Budapest in four hours. On one such journey—when the old schedule was still in force—it was terribly cold. The members of the suite certainly lacked nothing during the long hours in the train, but the Emperor huddled there, wrapped in his coat, shivering and dreadfully bored. Then I begged him to drink a glass of brandy, remarking that it was said to be a "hundred-years'-old drop."

"That is a shame!" protested the Emperor, but I permitted myself the retort that if His Majesty did not drink it, somebody else would, and quickly.

I had a hard battle to wage with the various Court officials in order that the necessary care should be given to matters concerning the Emperor's comfort and convenience, and the hardest part of it was, that I could not reckon on any support from His Majesty, which meant that I had to fight against two enemies at the same time.

The following episode will serve to show how little the people surrounding the Emperor cared for his personal comfort. His Majesty was confined to bed with lumbago, and had to sign official documents. As he was lying with his head to the light, the sun shone in his eyes, making it very difficult for the royal patient to read the papers or sign them. Count Paar saw this when he came in the morning to report

at the Emperor's sick-bed; he thought, however, that he was not called upon to give an opinion unasked, and considered it somebody else's duty to have the bed placed in a better position. His Excellency Bolfras, who came in after the Count, also took the stand that the royal physician, Kerzl, should order the necessary change, whereas Councillor Kerzl seemed to think that it was my place to see that His Majesty was comfortable. I, however, felt that without definite orders from the doctor I could not do anything, so the Emperor was left thus uncomfortably placed for a whole week—in fact until he was better and got up again. His Majesty never thought of complaining, or of ordering that the bed should be turned round so that he might have the light at his back.

Chief of the Court officials was Prince Montenuovo, a gentleman painfully proud of his ancient lineage, who never forgot the fact that his grandmother, Archduchess Marie Luise, was daughter of the late Emperor Francis I and widow of Napoleon I, whilst on his father's side he was descended from the German Counts of Neipperg, a family in the direct line.

Prince Montenuovo behaved in rather a mean way regarding the wages of the Court servants, whom the Emperor wished to see better paid. The Prince declared to His Majesty that the servants did not desire any increase in wages, being, in fact, very well satisfied with the scale then in force. Consequently the lodging-allowance only was raised—Court officials and servants having, you may be interested to know, to pay rent for their quarters in the Hofburg.

Intendant Wetschl was just such another little Montenuovo; if in accordance with the Emperor's orders he had to pay out any money, he always fell into a fit of rage.

Prince Montenuovo took a particular interest in the question of the granting of honours. Time and time again he influenced His Majesty, with the result that applications were refused which would otherwise certainly have been passed and signed. Neither did Montenuovo wish that the Emperor should in any way come into contact with his subjects; he and the other Court officials did everything they could to erect a kind of Great Wall of China between the ruler and his people. The sovereign was to remain unapproachable and invisible to ordinary mortals, who were to be dependent entirely upon their, that is the Court officials', moods and fancies. Those officials were just like servants, who, where strangers and the uninitiated are concerned, like to act the parts of their superiors.

If at manœuvres or on similar occasions the Emperor approached the people to talk with them, the attempt was quickly frustrated by some of the officials, who pushed themselves in between, forcing the public to move aside. To me Montenuovo also repeatedly gave definite orders that no one was to be permitted to see His Majesty without that Prince's special authority, though I must admit that I frequently transgressed that commandment.

It was necessary to surmount endless difficulties in order to be granted an audience. Montenuovo placed obstacles in the way wherever he could, more especially when some personal request was to be made, and

he did not care for the look of the person asking for the audience.

After Francis Joseph's death Montenuovo did his best not to give up one iota of his power, although he found himself somewhat restricted, for Emperor Karl did not take much stock of Montenuovo's belief in the "divine right of princes." With all the gentlemen of the Court the Prince was most unpopular, but as he was a very powerful person, most of them submissively burned incense at his shrine, anxious to keep in his good graces, cost what it might.

When Emperor Karl appointed a new Grand Steward in the person of the "Red Prince of Hohenlohe," Montenuovo was nought but a fallen star, who, with sleeves rolled up, hastily packed his belongings, grumbling bitterly the while :

"This is no place for me. I'm thankful to get away !"

It was Montenuovo who carried on the system of secrecy and "hushing-up" at Court, jealously condemning any contact between ruler and subjects, as showing lack of respect on the one side, and dangerous trustfulness on the other.

The Emperor himself longed to be really popular, and did not wish to shut himself away from the people ; he would have liked to go about freely, and was pleased when the public greeted and cheered him happily ; he was always glad to have an opportunity of getting into personal touch with his subjects, liking to be recognised and acclaimed at railway stations or when out driving or walking. Time and time again he said to me how much he would like to be truly popular, and how much it hurt him to be

cut off systematically and intentionally from his people.

It is totally wrong to speak only of the education of princes, as if such tutelage ended on accession to the throne. Surely no man has so many tutors and guardians, even when he has attained a ripe old age, as has a monarch. Creatures whom his powerful word has raised from the common round, and whom his word could condemn again to nothingness, revenge themselves for the problematical duration of their good fortune, and like wasps that may die any minute, would fain wound with their poisoned dart the being who can destroy them.

## CHAPTER VII

### COUNT PAAR AND THE *AIDES-DE-CAMP*

ONE of the most popular figures of old Austria was Count Eduard Paar, His Majesty's *aide-de-camp*. The people were so used to seeing the Emperor and his *aide-de-camp* together that they usually mentioned them together too, so that a play on words arose: "Francis Joseph and his *aide-de-camp* are an indivisible pair" (Paar=couple.) Shakespeare says: "Let me have men about me that are fat and such as sleep at nights," but Francis Joseph went one better in this direction, for he chose as his nearest helper an *aide-de-camp* who could also sleep exceedingly well during the day. Count Eduard Paar was a member of a family originally from Italy, whose head had the title of "Prince," and was in 1905 granted the honour of being addressed as "Serene Highness," whilst those born later called themselves Counts Paar. Count Eduard was born in 1837, filled the position of General of Cavalry, was Colonel-in-Chief of the Second Regiment of Dragoons, and possessed all the great Orders, including that of the Golden Fleece. As early as 1860 he was one of the Emperor's *aides-de-camp*, returning to the troops after his four years' service terminated, and was then appointed chief *aide-de-camp* in 1885.

The Emperor, who had known Count Paar from

his youth up, was very much attached to him, admiring, in addition to his characteristic good qualities, his gift of—keeping quiet. Count Paar, however, was silent not so much on philosophical grounds as on the grounds of general comfort.

Paar told me—always with a shudder—how, when he was still young, he had had to walk with the Emperor on the bastions at an hour when everything around was still enjoying morning slumbers, and one met, at the most, some drowsy milkmaid. “His Majesty has had the habit of rising before the hens, ever since I can remember,” Count Paar would say dejectedly.

In his office one always found him in slippers, shirt-sleeves and without tie. The missing articles of attire hung on the door, and if a visitor were announced the necessity of getting into his tunic seemed to Count Paar a most painful and superfluous discomfort; he would wrinkle his brow, look around helplessly, wonder how he could become master of the situation, and then decide that the reception of the visitor could best be attended to by the Adjutant of the day.

The Emperor knew his chief *aide-de-camp* well, and consequently called him but seldom; when it was really necessary, however, he never added that he was to come at once, for His Majesty was well aware of the fact that his *aide-de-camp* only dressed very slowly. Then when Count Paar, escorted by the Adjutant of the day, finally appeared, he always looked so discouraged that His Majesty never omitted to say:

“You must excuse my having sent for you, Paar. . . .”

Count Paar was First Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and in this capacity reported to the Emperor every morning at nine o'clock. His duties consisted of the settlement of His Majesty's private affairs: if artists wanted to show or sell something to the Emperor; if foreign attachés wished to pay their respects; if a regiment desired a flag or a portrait of the sovereign, or if it was a question of making presents or remunerations from His Majesty's Privy Purse,—then Count Paar stepped in. On official occasions he had to accompany the Emperor; on trips from and to Schönbrunn, only the adjutant of the day went with His Majesty.

It was when there were manœuvres or inspections of troops, that we had the opportunity of admiring the chief *aide-de-camp* in all his comfort. The Emperor having mounted long before and spurred away, Count Paar remained by a bench up to which he had ordered his horse to be led, and having given his mount a pat, whistled a tune, lit a cigarette very thoroughly, then, at last, he would climb from the bench on to the horse's back. Very often, however, he would then slide down again, give his mount to a stable-man, and then settle himself smartly in a carriage already awaiting him, to drive on after the Emperor. His Majesty knew all about the Count's little weaknesses, and did not fail on occasion to get a laugh out of them, but he esteemed the personal qualities of this excellent man—characteristics which he might certainly have sought without finding in many an early riser, good rider and toady.

Count Paar's adjutant was Baron Margutti, who began his career as Chamberlain when he was a



captain and later became a major-general. Under the Count were also the four assistant *aides-de-camp* of the Emperor, who were on duty in turn, and whose choice always gave the chief much food for thought. When an *aide-de-camp* was to be appointed the Commanders of the different Army Corps usually laid before Count Paar the conduct sheets of officers with good reports who were considered suitable for the position; they were mostly of the rank of major, from all four services, and after having served the four years at Court they were sent back to their regiments, were promoted, and received a command.

These gentlemen led nice, comfortable lives. They took turns for four days each, commenced duty at five in the afternoon, although usually they did not have anything to do until five in the morning. At five in the afternoon the adjutant of the day waited at the Emperor's study door to see whether there were any orders; then, having lighted his cigar, His Majesty himself would go to the door—instead of ringing—and would say with a slight bow:

“I thank you!” which meant: “I do not need anything more.”

Then the Adjutant could go off duty, and the one whose turn came next had to be ready for orders, although usually the Emperor did not call him until the next morning.

These appointments as adjutants were naturally very much sought after; for many gentlemen they offered the opportunity of straightening their financial affairs, because often the Emperor paid their debts, even before they took up their duties.

A very noble and generous cavalier, well-liked, but rather nervous, was Prince Rudolf Liechtenstein. A remarkable adjutant was Count Saint-Quentin, who was stone deaf ; for four years the Emperor had to shout to make himself understood, and I for one wondered at the great ruler's patience, but, considerate as he was, he would not send the *aide-de-camp* back to the regiment until the four years were up.

With Prince Dietrichstein we, or rather the doors of the royal apartments, had a great deal of trouble. In his nervous haste the Prince knocked into everything with his scabbard and scratched the woodwork so badly, that during his period of service, the doors of the imperial apartments had to be repaired every year. The present Hungarian president, Horthy, was also *aide-de-camp* to His Majesty, and well knew how to win his sovereign's trust and liking.

Ludwig v. Höhnel was Corvette-Captain when he came as *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor ; he knew many languages and had a high degree of general knowledge. With all his devotion to his imperial master—devotion which in some quarters was thought to border on servility—he never wavered one hair's-breadth from his opinions, and permitted himself, even if in a perfectly humble manner, to contradict His Majesty. Thus it came to pass that the Emperor did not care for him especially, but he impressed His Majesty, who always valued his opinions. Höhnel was brave and undismayed, and never lost his sang-froid, however dangerous the situation might be. His hunting adventures are well enough known.

## CHAPTER VIII

### “ MADAME ”

THE Emperor's consort, with all the rights and privileges due to her exalted rank was the Empress Elisabeth. Officially this is quite correct, and Court ceremonial knew but one Empress Elisabeth ; yet at Court there was not only one Empress as representative first lady in the land, but also “ Madame,” and to everyone at Court, including the Emperor Francis Joseph and the Empress Elisabeth, “ Madame ” was Frau v. Schratt. Everyone liked to see this charming, lovable woman, and every one of us was genuinely pleased to hear her laugh, for it was an enchanting, melodious, infectious sound, never forced, never insolent or overbearing, but a laugh from the heart that reached the heart of the listener.

I know that many a person who has heard the title “ The old Emperor as seen by his valet Ketterl ” is particularly curious about this chapter referring to the Empress and Frau v. Schratt. Why, around the mere name of “ Schratt ” hovers a cloud of rumours redolent of the whispered stories of the Court ; and who should be better able to give exact information than the Emperor's valet ? The very name of valet implies complete knowledge of all personalities, guarantees intimacy with the most secret details, and

in proportion to the strictness and discretion proper to his calling, one may await with all the greater interest the disclosures which may follow when a valet suddenly feels the writer's urge and publishes his memoirs. “Memoirs of a Valet”—would not that be a good title for a French play of easy manners? And I am sure that many a modern revue author would be glad if I would let him use it! The very definition “valet,” and the fear that some readers may take the standpoint that, from a valet, only piquant tales and anecdotes should be forthcoming, makes it difficult for me to begin.

The old adage hath it that no man is a hero to his valet; it implies that all fripperies and trappings fall, leaving nothing but human weakness and smallness. Well, Francis Joseph remained even to his valet—who for nearly three decades accompanied him wherever he went—always the Emperor, in all situations, in happiness and in grief, in times of good fortune or when hatred and disturbance ruled; and that is the highest praise that one can give a sovereign: that he is, not on State occasions alone, but within his own modest four walls, just as much the Emperor as any illiterate in the most God-forsaken Galician village could picture him.

Frau v. Schratt was not the Emperor's *belle amie*, but she was his friend, and at that his truest, best, cleverest and most disinterested one.

It is a common experience that people who have no equal, who traverse life's way on the solitary heights, and on whose shoulders rest heavy burdens of responsibility and care, feel the need to trust—apart from God—also some sympathetic human soul

to whom they can unbosom themselves; and this place is often filled by some noble woman of understanding heart. I am not in a position to give an opinion on the mental capacity and abilities of Frau v. Schratt; of her other characteristics and virtues, which I can well judge seeing that I had the opportunity of observing "Madame" in the most diverse circumstances, I will speak later.

As I was told, the Emperor had met Frau v. Schratt at an audience in about 1870, and had been very much pleased by the charming artiste. As in the following years Elisabeth wandered round the world ever more restlessly and without fixed abode, having very little time to spare for her husband or the Court at Vienna, it was really she herself who was most anxious to find some woman who, if one may so express it, should be sympathetic to the Emperor and look after him. It is well known that the Empress and Frau v. Schratt were very fond indeed of each other, and that Frau v. Schratt accompanied the royal couple even when Francis Joseph was travelling with Elisabeth. The two ladies got on very well together, often kissed, and even an outsider gained the impression that there was complete understanding between them.

When the Emperor lost his wife there devolved on Frau v. Schratt special duties as His Majesty's helper and comforter; it was practically in her company only that the Emperor again found happiness and peace, diversion, refreshment and understanding, although he never talked to her of politics; she brought sunshine and joy into his life. The Emperor was very fond of listening to her stories of Viennese

society, thus learning what they did and what they did not do ; just as if he habitually lived in their midst. The Emperor's voice had deep tones, whereas Frau v. Schratt's was melodious and liquid.

With loving care she watched over His Majesty's health and tried her best to make his private life as comfortable as possible. His private rooms in Schönbrunn she decorated with many beautiful yet useful articles of furniture ; from her came the carpet at the Emperor's bed-side, the gorgeous altar-cloth of the oratory, the silver crucifix and the two votive tablets, the dressing-table with its costly cover, and even the pompous baroque writing-table in the study at Schönbrunn we owed to her kind attention. Gladly Francis Joseph accepted presents from her, and so it came about that a strange mixture of silk and linen, iron and silver, in the imperial apartments betrayed on the one hand the soldierly simplicity of their occupant, and, on the other, the touch of some gracious womanly hand.

From Paris Frau v. Schratt once brought His Majesty a small plain casket, from which when opened there sprang a little, modest nightingale, and this musical-box represented with such absolute fidelity to nature the beating and sobbing of a nightingale's song, that one seemed to be listening to a living bird. This casket always stood on the small table on which the Emperor kept his cigars, and the song of the artificial nightingale pleased His Majesty so much that often when he was alone he would wind up his toy. In later years, when the little Archduke Otto came to Schönbrunn, the Emperor had to set the musical-box going every day, over and over

again, until the young prince could be persuaded of the truth of His Majesty's remark that the nightingale was growing hoarse from singing too long.

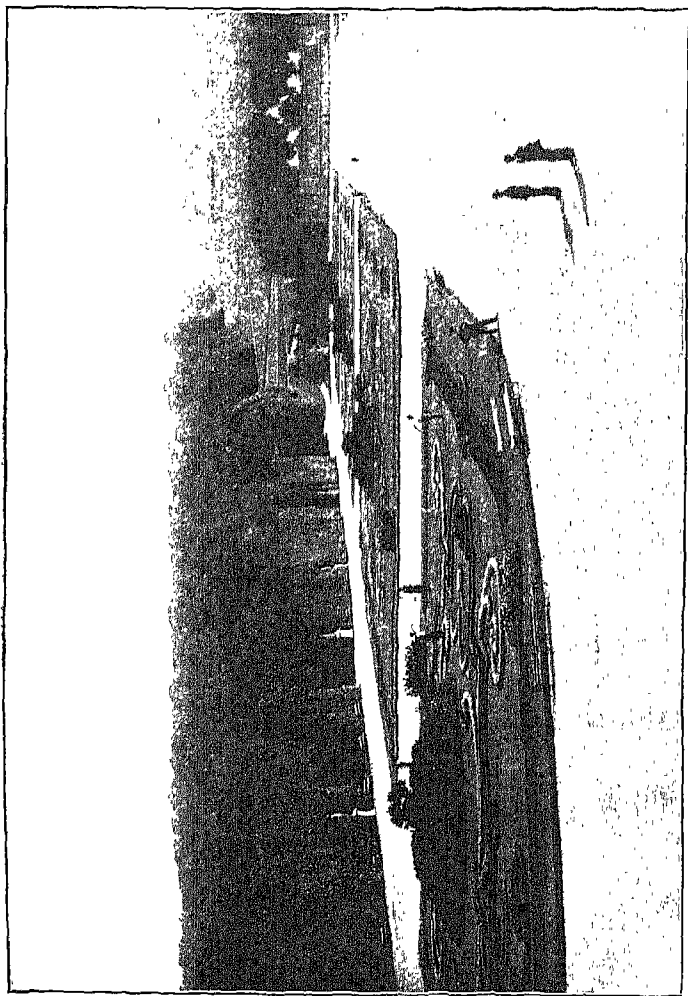
In Paris a family named Bontemps have been making these mechanical songsters since 1848, and the mantle of their fame has now descended upon the shoulders of the great-grandchild of the founder of the firm. Four hundred years before the birth of Christ—so Monsieur Bontemps informed me when I once had occasion to visit him in the Rue de Cléry—Archytes followed this trade in Tarentum, and made a bird that could actually flap its wings and fly. After that it was the eighteenth century before a French craftsman constructed a little bird in which he put wee organ-tubes and clockwork ; Bontemps perfected this art, and now his birds sing with the plaintive throb and trill of their fellows on the leafy boughs.

Another of Frau v. Schratt's favourite presents was the gift of some of those "Queens of Cigars," splendid, mild tasting, heavenly smelling Havana Imported. Ordinarily the Emperor smoked the Austrian products, Virginia and Regalia Media.

"Madame " often called me to her at her villa at Schönbrunn. The remains of breakfast might still be standing on the table, and I should be invited to sit on the chair on which, only a short time before, His Majesty had been seated. At such visits, which I made when His Majesty had been breakfasting with her and had just set off home, I submitted to "Madame " my requests—not personal requests, certainly, but things which I very much wanted for my illustrious master. For example, I begged her to try and induce His Majesty to follow my well-inten-







THE PALACE GARDENS AT SCHÖNBRUNN

tioned suggestions regarding his health, and particularly his diet; or I asked her to see that the Emperor obtained this or that much-needed object, and I always found in her a true ally and helper.

Frau v. Schratt was also very anxious to help the Court servants; the Christmas boxes that we received from the Emperor we really owed to her, for when she once asked me at Christmas what we had got, I with absolute truth replied, “Nothing”—whereupon with horrified expression she turned to His Majesty, who was present, and he then asked her to buy presents for us immediately.

Once before Christmas Frau v. Schratt asked me what the Emperor would like. Now, we had two quite ordinary tin boxes standing in the study, in which the Emperor kept some biscuits, as he occasionally ate a few during the day. At the same time the Empress, through the Grand Steward, Count Bellegarde, asked regarding His Majesty’s Christmas wishes. As I wanted new tins, two for the Hofburg and two for Schönbrunn, I informed Her Majesty’s “delegate,” as well as Frau v. Schratt, that the most serviceable present would be tin biscuit-boxes. When the Emperor saw biscuits from the Empress and from Frau v. Schratt he exclaimed in amazement:

“How strange that the Empress and Frau v. Schratt should each have exactly the same idea!” but the penetrating glance in my direction showed me that he had guessed the connection.

When His Majesty was in Vienna he drove practically every day after the one o’clock luncheon to Schönbrunn, to have a short walk in the fresh air of the “Private Garden,” a little space reserved for the

Emperor from the grounds of the Castle which were open to the public. At the Hofburg in Vienna the Emperor unfortunately had no chance of exercise in the open. On these daily walks, even in winter, His Majesty was accompanied by Frau v. Schratt.

The Emperor's messages, given to me in his own handwriting almost every day to be telephoned to Frau v. Schratt, will perhaps show the tone of their intercourse.

"The Emperor will be ready at one, and asks whether Madame will come to Schönbrunn too?"

"May I visit Madame to-morrow at eleven o'clock on my way to Lainz?"

I would like to remark that "Madame" by no means always answered in the affirmative.

When Frau v. Schratt moved from her house in the Elisabethstrasse to that given her by the Emperor in the Karntnerring, His Majesty ordered me to telephone, to enquire how she had stood the exertion of moving and how she felt: "Ask how Frau v. Schratt is to-day after the removal. I thank her for her letter and congratulations on the betrothal of Prince Georg of Bavaria.<sup>1</sup> I hope soon to see Madame again."

When staying at Schönbrunn His Majesty worked only until half-past six in the morning, then went through the still deserted walks, past the private zoo, to a small gate in the wall opposite the Gloriettegasse, opened it with his small key and fetched Frau v. Schratt who was living in her villa for a walk in the park, afterwards taking her back to her home.

If "Madame" was dining with us the Emperor

<sup>1</sup> Princess Gisela's son, the Bavarian grandchild of the Emperor.

was pleurably excited all the morning, and carefully selected all her favourite dishes from the menu-card presented to him. If His Majesty was invited to a meal with Frau v. Schratt in the Gloriettegasse, he always told me of it the evening before with a happy smile, so that I had ample time to countermand the dinner. It certainly was very pleasant at “ Madame’s ” house. If His Majesty was dining with her, “ Madame ” often arranged for the Schrammel Quartet to play, the musicians being placed in an adjoining room hidden from sight, and although the Emperor was no judge of music, he always enjoyed the Viennese airs, and came back home in the best and liveliest of spirits.

In addition to her beauty and her artistic taste Frau v. Schratt had one thing more in common with Empress Elisabeth,—she had not the slightest understanding of the value of money, and consequently spent it in handfals. The Emperor, although ordinarily very generous in money matters, occasionally grew angry ; then Frau v. Schratt sulked too, and made herself scarce for weeks on end. This again touched His Majesty very nearly, for he loved “ Madame ” greatly. Grumpily he wandered about, but when the matter had been made up, then everything was once more *couleur de rose*.

I remember, however, that on one occasion Frau v. Schratt was not seen for six weeks. Then I was really sorry for the poor Emperor ; he was almost dejected, and the then Court Secretary of the Household Chancellery, Hawerda-Wehrlandt (later Leader of the Cabinet under Emperor Karl), had to settle the affair.

When His Majesty was expecting “ Madame ” on

a visit, he would repeatedly jump up from his desk and go into the adjoining bedroom to brush his hair and beard. He had received also from Frau v. Schratt a small pocket-mirror which always stood on the desk, bearing the dedication: "Portrait de la personne que j'aime."

At Ischl, if he was not going stag-hunting, His Majesty always breakfasted with Frau v. Schratt, and often passed the afternoon with her as well, if work permitted and no stag was signalled. When he took tea with her Frau v. Schratt, always anxious to interest him, often invited members of the best Viennese society, and these happy hours were a real tonic to His Majesty. He then wore uniform tunic, without sword, but carried a walking-stick, or in wet weather an umbrella.

Often he met there a jolly crowd of artists. When he once appeared unexpectedly to tea the famous comedian Tewele wanted to depart at once, through sheer fright. The Emperor, however, held him back and asked why he was running away. Then Tewele stammered:

"But, Your Majesty, just think if you suddenly came face to face with the Emperor of Austria!"

At that His Majesty laughed, and Tewele stayed.

When the famous comedian Alexander Girardi had been proposed for the Honours List, and was impatiently awaiting the confirmation, he begged Frau v. Schratt to induce the Emperor to sign the documents relating to the matter rather more quickly; Frau v. Schratt did ask the Emperor to have documents referring to Girardi put through promptly, but His Majesty in a rather repressing manner

remarked, “That Girardi would have to wait until it came to his turn, and the documents were duly put forward for signing.” So Girardi had to be patient.

Some of the other members of the Castle Theatre, for instance, Baumeister, Devrient and Krastel, were luckier and had to thank “Madame” that the Emperor not only took a warm interest in them, but also provided them with a small reserve fund. To my knowledge Baron Gorup, Chief of Police, owed his promotion in a great degree to Frau v. Schratt; she had known him when he was Head of the Safety Squad at Schönbrunn, and as such had often had the opportunity of escorting “Madame” home.

The Archduchesses also were on most friendly terms with “Madame,” and repeatedly Princess Gisela and Archduchess Maria Valerie accompanied their royal father to the Villa Felicitas to take tea with Frau v. Schratt. On such occasions His Majesty would send a message to Frau v. Schratt: “We are coming at five o’clock.”

In the same way “Madame” would come to the imperial villa, and the Emperor would invite her in something like the following terms:

“Archduchess Maria Valerie wishes to see Madame again. Can Madame come to us in the garden at five? Please reply.”

That Frau v. Schratt also came to Lainz to dine with the royal couple I have already mentioned in the chapter on the Empress Elisabeth.

Often one hears that the Emperor used to play at *taroc* at Frau v. Schratt’s, the names of famous people being given as his regular partners. This is quite incorrect. Francis Joseph did not even know the

cards. I remember that His Majesty once asked Archduchess Maria Valerie after dinner what she was going to do, and when she replied that she and the company were going to play bridge from eight o'clock onwards, His Majesty remarked :

" Bridge ? Then I'll watch you, for I do not know a single card. Since I played ' Black Peter ' when I was a boy I have never touched a pack."

Frau v. Schratt gave the Emperor advice on all manner of things. When Archduchess Valerie once informed her father that one of the babies had got a first tooth, and His Majesty told " Madame," she exclaimed :

" Then the ayah must have a present ! It's customary."

The Emperor opened his eyes wide in astonishment.

" What's that ? " he asked. " Must I give her something ? But neither she nor I has had the tooth ! "

When Frau v. Schratt was away she wrote to the Emperor every day, and he replied by return. When he was away hunting, during Her Majesty's lifetime, Francis Joseph always telegraphed to " both " at once. For instance :

" To Frau v. Kiss-Schratt, Vienna, Hietzing, Gloriettegasse 9. Sincere greetings on your return to the Gloriettegasse. Did you receive my telegram in Salzburg ? Weather improving. Did not bag anything this morning. How are you ? Francis Joseph."

Then to the Empress at the same time :

" The Emperor and King to Her Majesty the Empress and Queen, Meran, Tyrol, Hottel Kaiserhof.

Shot nothing this morning. At night to the steamer, hunting early in the morning and at night, then to Budapest. Weather improving. Very well. No time to write. To our next meeting! Francis Joseph.”

Fault-finders and scoffers will be sure to draw malicious conclusions from the similarity in the wording of the two telegrams, but to me these lines only bring a still firmer faith in my belief that Francis Joseph, innocently and without any secrecy, clung in equal degree to two women.



## CHAPTER IX

### FRANCIS JOSEPH, HUNTER

THE Austrian who saw the Emperor at celebrations, met him in the country, or knew him mainly from statues and pictures, always thought of Francis Joseph as a soldier or as a hunter. It is remarkable that the Austrians, who are certainly not a warlike people and never were, found a representation of the Emperor in civilian dress very strange, and the number of those who ever set eyes on him in morning-coat or dress-suit must be small indeed.

Every spare minute the Emperor allowed himself, if at all possible, was dedicated to hunting. Francis Joseph was a "gentleman-hunter."

It is said that a man's true character shows itself most clearly in moments of emotion. We know, for instance, how at cards the most beautiful mask may become distorted and change into a repulsive grimace ; conceit, self-seeking, avarice, lack of consideration of others, and desire for personal gain suddenly creep forth from their dim hiding-places, and in a flash some trait comes to light that has been repressed with iron hand through decades of training, education and self-control. Never miss a chance—never let anything slip—thus the commercial mind autocratically asserts itself. . . . Francis Joseph was

passionately fond of hunting, and yet Francis Joseph the Hunter was still always an Emperor.

He was like his contemporary, the old Prince-Regent Luitpold of Bavaria, and not like the Heir-Apparent, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who only cared for as large a bag and as little trouble as possible. For instance, Franz Ferdinand employed hundreds of beaters and had the chamois driven from the mountains into the valleys, whereas Francis Joseph climbed up to the proper positions, not only to enjoy the pleasures of the chase, but also to admire the natural beauties of the high mountains.

On the estate of Prince Pless, Rominten, in East Prussia, Franz Ferdinand once shot ninety-nine boars out of a hundred let out from the "pen," whereas Francis Joseph only shot boars from the butts, or when stalking. Certainly the Emperor, although a splendid shot, could not rival Franz Ferdinand in that respect, for the Archduke could bring down pheasants on the wing with a single bullet; but there is a vast difference between a "hunter" and a "crack shot."

In his younger days Francis Joseph used a single-bore muzzle-loader, the well-known "Ischler Stutze," a very effective weapon; later the Lancaster Double-Bore Repeater, and in his declining years, when his eyes—once so sharp that against the flecked background not even a mountain-goat in its winter coat ever escaped them—were losing their power, a rifle with telescopic sights. For blackcock, woodcock, snipe and all small game, His Majesty used a shotgun, but the Emperor was and remained first and foremost a mountain hunter. To him it seemed much

more desirable to shoot stags, chamois and boars than to bring down poor partridges and hares.

Almost at the gates of his capital the Emperor had splendid stag shooting, a preserve, the antlered inmates of which could match in strength the Hungarian stags. This was the famous Lobau estate, where, before and after the battle of Aspern, Napoleon's army lay. Yet Francis Joseph scorned to win trophies on such an effortless hunt; he felt more drawn to Gödöllő, and still more to his Salzburg and Steiermark mountains. Further, at the time when the deer were in rut, His Majesty usually stayed as the guest of Archduke Friedrich in the castle of the Archduchess Isabella, Friedrich's wife, in Keris-Erdő, on his estates of Bellye-Karabancza near Orsova, which lay on one of the numerous arms of the Danube, edged by sedge and endless swamps. One had to sail through the broads in boats, and the place simply swarmed with hordes of the most blood-thirsty of insects, dense clouds of which at once attacked any one who dared to venture into their domain.

Once—we were not expecting the hunting-party back so soon—I saw a boat coming along the arm of the Danube; its occupant was dipping first his left, then his right hand into the water, and wiping his face, yet when he got out I could scarcely recognise in him the chief *aide-de-camp*, Count Paar, so badly was his face swollen from the countless mosquito-bites.

"I know I look a pretty picture," he said with a slightly acid smile, "but I shot something all the same."

Gradually the other gentlemen arrived too, all, like Paar, stung almost past recognition. Only the

Emperor had, for some peculiar reason, escaped the insects' ferocious attack. Some of the guests were even feverish from the bites, but everyone was in a cheerful mood, and turned up at the Hunt Dinner, at which the ladies also were present. At that time Countess Chotek, later the wife of the Heir-Apparent, was Lady-in-Waiting to Archduchess Isabella.

In Bellye-Karabancza were to be found probably the finest stags in the whole of the old Dual-Monarchy. Their antlers were simply enormous, and when stalking them through the brush-covered glades one did not know whether one were looking at antlers, or at the boughs of an enormous gnarled shrub. Then, if some such old warrior came into the open, his antlers would be draped and festooned with the damp weeds.

There were also splendid wild boars and capital stags on the moors of Gödöllő—some 28,000 yokes in extent—with their primeval forests. Previously these lands (about 30,000 acres) had belonged to Prince Grassalkovics, but when the Emperor was crowned King of Hungary they were presented to him by the Land of the Holy Crown of St. Stephen, and were registered, on the 21st March, 1867, as Imperial Crown Property. Only ten days later the Emperor set off there for the spring snipe shooting.

The Emperor was very much attached to Gödöllő; there, accompanied only by a single loader, he hunted stags and wild boars; there he could be the man and not the Emperor, and there, too, he was natural and talkative.

Envy in matters of the chase—one of the chief characteristics of the Heir-Apparent Franz Ferdinand

—was unknown to His Majesty. Only the wild boars proved an exception, for he would not permit even his son-in-law, Prince Leopold of Bavaria, who was usually his “ Benjamin ” in such cases, to shoot them. Very often the Prince asked his royal father-in-law to allow him to shoot just one wild boar, but the Emperor always replied :

“ What ! That as well ? You go along after stags and does—shoot as many of those as you want.”

On one occasion, however, the Prince managed to induce the imperial Head Huntsman, Pettera, to take him after boars. The Emperor heard the shots, and afterward asked the man :

“ Pettera, did you hear those shots ? By the way, with whom were you hunting ? ”

“ Begging your pardon, Your Majesty,” stammered the huntsman in the greatest embarrassment, “ I was with Prince Leopold, but His Grace only shot a young pig—in fact, it really was only a sucking-pig ! ”

The Emperor said :

“ Is that so ? ” in a rather unbelieving manner. “ Well, anyhow, I’d like to see that sucking-pig for myself ! ”

What was there to do ? The imperial hunter was led to the courtyard, and there on the ground lay a fine wild boar. “ See here, Pettera ! ” His Majesty called angrily, “ make them give you your school fees back if you can’t tell a sucking-pig from a full-grown boar ! ”

Only his beloved daughter Gisela could soothe His Majesty’s anger, and at last call forth a forgiving smile.

Unlike the German Emperor, who for small as well





THE EMPEROR IN SPORTING COSTUME, 1898

as large game always appeared in the theatrical "Royal Prussian Hunting Costume," our Emperor always wore the same simple and business-like clothes when hunting: coat of rough cloth, knee-length stockings, round hat with leather band, studded shoes, and leather shorts, of which the colour was completely gone, and which were very shrunken by the long wear and exposure to rain, snow and sun; rubbed thin and patchy in their old age, they looked like the very shabbiest suit of some stable-lad. Only after a hard struggle would His Majesty permit new "leathers" to be bought, and even then they had to be made to look old and worn—by rubbing them on the steps and such methods—before he would put them on, as they would otherwise have appeared foppish!

When the Emperor went stalking or bird-shooting, accompanied by only one loader, amusing things often happened. So on one occasion he met a woodman who did not recognise His Majesty.

"I say, forester, can you give me a light?" asked the man. "And are you after the birds?" continued the honest native.

"Why do you want to know?" queried His Majesty.

"Well," grunted the other, "because if you talk so loud the birds will have the laugh on you, and that's why!"

The Emperor smiled; the loader nudged the woodman and whispered to him who it was. The woodman doffed his cap, and quickly said:

"Don't take it amiss, Mr. Emperor; it was meant well."



When hunting in the mountains His Majesty went to bed at seven the evening before, and got up soon after midnight. Breakfast was then served at Ischl in the so-called "Swimming School," that is, in the dressing-room used by the bathers, at three a.m., the Emperor creeping down the stairs as quietly as possible in order not to awaken the Archduchess Valerie and the children.

When stalking, the climb to the high-lying stands often took from one to one and a half hours, yet even in the later years of his life the Emperor considered such ascents mere child's play, and never let anyone else carry his rifle, but took it himself, slung over his shoulder.

When he got home between ten and eleven in the morning the Emperor changed, took something to eat, and then set to work at once to attend to the documents that had come in, whilst the other gentlemen went out for a walk or sleep. This time was their own absolutely, for during these hours the Emperor never called upon any one of the gentlemen of his suite.

Often Francis Joseph came back "like a tailor," as our hunters say, that is, without having bagged anything at all. Any day may be a hunting day, but not even for an Emperor is every day a lucky day.

These hunting-trips represented to Francis Joseph his only holidays for recuperation, and his only furloughs; yet even then he did not give up his whole time to the pleasures of the chase, but attended with faithful exactitude to the duties of State.

I myself am no hunter, but I can quite well understand that the young followers of St. Hubert saw in our Emperor a shining example and illustration of the

“honest hunter,” and honoured him ; and so I hope that these few lines which I dedicate to Francis Joseph the sportsman, may be as a “green-leaved twig,” which, full of sadness and faithful to his memory, I lay on his grave.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to the hunting custom of presenting a twig of oak in leaf.

## CHAPTER X

### THE HEIR TO THE THRONE

THE terrible death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, and the fact that this atrocious murder gave the signal for the World War, should, to all intents and purposes, place the Heir-Apparent himself and his family beyond criticism. If I am now to write about Franz Ferdinand, I must free myself entirely from sentiment regarding him, and speak of him as if he were still living or had at least died a natural death.

Franz Ferdinand had a difficult position in Austria. He had stepped into the place of the universally beloved Crown Prince Rudolf, who had been so full of the joy of life, that one can scarcely imagine a greater contrast between two people than there was between the lovable, happy Rudolf, and the grave, strict, I would almost say gloomy-looking, Franz Ferdinand. It has been said that the seemingly eternal waiting for his accession to the throne made him impatient, moody and ill-humoured, like an old maid who is afraid of missing the last chance of matrimony. Franz Ferdinand's outward appearance was certainly not prepossessing, and one needed to know him more intimately to learn that the shell was no criterion for the kernel. It cannot be denied that the Austrian population awaited with somewhat

mixed feelings Franz Ferdinand's accession to the throne. Most of the races in the kingdom saw in him a danger, and the whole Jewish population in particular felt him to be their enemy; the fact that he had taken over the protectorate of some Catholic Institutes, whose anti-Semitic tendency was unquestionable, may have had a great deal to do with this.

Franz Ferdinand was always looked upon as a foreign element in the Monarchy, and it was openly said that his reign would not, in all probability, be a long one.

It was always affirmed that the Heir-Apparent hated Hungary. That, however, is not quite correct; at the worst there were only rather strained relations between him and that country, and his views merely diverged in some respects from those of the Hungarian leaders. The tragic part of the thing is that this presumed "foe" of Hungary was murdered by the Serbs, the bitter enemies of Hungary. Franz Ferdinand was intensely hated by the Serbs; consequently they noted with passionate anger that he had a preference for holding manœuvres and army exercises just on their borders, and the attack on the Heir to the Throne was certainly prepared long before it actually happened.

Between the old Emperor and the Heir-Apparent there were frequent differences of opinion. Franz Ferdinand wanted to gain influence by degrees and to prepare the ground for the thoroughgoing reforms which he intended to institute immediately on his accession. Consequently it was only on matters of State that the Emperor commanded the Heir-

Apparent's presence, or when Franz Ferdinand himself begged for an audience. On the one hand, he wanted to please rather than to offend the old Emperor ; on the other, he felt it to be his duty to discuss certain things that went against the grain with the old ruler, who was not fond of innovations. Franz Ferdinand was then feverish from nervousness, and always rather sharp and unpleasant to all around him ; he worried as to how he should broach the subject, what the Emperor could want with him, and whether, at the last moment, his courage would fail, and he would not speak at all.

He could not rid himself of the feeling that the Hungarians wanted to leave him out in the cold, for the rumour had reached his ears that on Francis Joseph's death it was intended to offer the Hungarian Throne to the Prussian Prince Eitel Friedrich. Consequently nobody can be astonished if Franz Ferdinand's sympathies were thus alienated from Hungary. Unfortunately he did not conceal his feelings from the Hungarians themselves ; when he was in their country he always stayed the night in his railway coach, thus causing much bad feeling.

Franz Ferdinand did not love the Prussians particularly. When, for instance, a German officers' deputation once came to Vienna, he shook hands and spoke to all present with the exception of the detachments of Prussian regiments, past whom he strode without saying a word. This behaviour on the part of the Archduke naturally resulted in a complaint to the Emperor, who gave the Heir-Apparent a sharp reprimand.

At first the Heir to the Throne was not on good

terms with Emperor Wilhelm II, but the German Emperor wanted Franz Ferdinand's friendship, and knew how to draw him to his side by degrees; this Wilhelm II did, first by favouring the marriage of the Heir-Apparent to Countess Chotek, then by receiving the Archduke's bride in Berlin with all the honours usually accorded only to a princess of equal rank. Further, the German Emperor, in all earnest, talked to the Heir-Apparent of the proposal to make the Archduke's son, the Duke of Hohenberg, Duke of Lorraine; in short, by such means the German Emperor gained the Heir-Apparent's sympathies.

The Archduke's bride, as is well known, was born a Countess Chotek. The Choteks are very old Bohemian nobility, and received in 1745 the rank of "Counts of the Empire." Countess Sophie, later Duchess of Hohenberg, who was murdered at her husband's side in Sarajevo, was the fifth child of the Royal and Imperial Chamberlain, Privy Councillor and Grand Steward, Count Bohuslav Chotek and his wife Wilhelmine, *née* Countess Kinsky. The Kinskys, also, are of the best old Bohemian nobility, having been Counts of the Empire since 1628. Even so, according to the Habsburg family statutes, and the German princely laws, she was certainly not by birth her husband's equal.

When I was still in Count Bellegarde's service four of the sisters Chotek once came to stay as my master's guests: Countess Sophie Chotek, her sister Antonie who later married the Saxon cavalry officer Karl v. Wuthenau, Zdenka, who had been Lady-in-Waiting to Crown Princess Stephanie and later entered the Convent of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at Riedenburg,

Vorarlberg and Otavia, whose hand was sought by the German nobleman His Highness Count Joachim von Schonburg, a member of the highest nobility that ranks as "of equal birth" with the reigning princely houses. They arrived without a maid, and appeared to be in somewhat straitened financial circumstances, for the uppers of their shoes were mended with thread—a fact that caused much talk among the servants.

Countess Sophie was later appointed Lady-in-Waiting to Archduchess Isabella; the salary of a Lady-in-Waiting consisted of the respectable sum of 2000 crowns a month, but even so, as stated before, the Choteks were not rich. Archduchess Isabella had always hoped that the Heir-Apparent would be attracted to one of her daughters and would ask for the hand of the young Archduchess Maria Anna, later the wife of Prince Elias of Bourbon-Parma, for the Heir-Apparent was seen remarkably often in the Archduke Friedrich's home. Then, when Archduchess Isabella once asked her daughter how matters were going between herself and Franz Ferdinand, the Princess remarked :

"Oh, he does not come to see me; he comes because of 'Sopherl' . . ." which was the name given by the Archduchesses to the Lady-in-Waiting, Countess Sophie Chotek.

As a crowning misfortune the Archduke once left his watch by the tennis-courts. On the chain hung a medallion, and when Archduchess Isabella opened it—for royalty is no protection against curiosity—the portrait of her Lady-in-Waiting, Countess "Sopherl," smiled up at her.

One can quite well imagine what a fuss there was

then. The poor Lady-in-Waiting was "released from duty" very suddenly, but the connection between the two lovers continued unchanged. When one considers how an Archduke of old Austria was flattered by all women, how the most race-proud beauties considered it an honour to be "shadowed" by his grace and favour, and how, surrounded by the temptations and the possibilities of easy victory the Archduke fluttered like unfettered butterflies from flower to flower, one must admit that it was probably a very deep and sincere love which bound Franz Ferdinand to Countess Chotek. It is a matter of absolute fact that the two lived the happiest and most harmonious married life, never left one another, and were the most devoted and tender parents to their children. To many a crowned wife and mother, both before and after, the Duchess of Hohenberg might well serve as a shining example. Though she was not considered equal in rank, she proved her innate nobility by her acts, for in danger she remained at her husband's side, and even died for him—for the bullet that killed her was intended for her husband, and when she saw the murderer raise the revolver she bent forward in front of the Archduke to protect his body with her own. So she, too, fell—a martyr and a true wife.

To their subordinates both Franz Ferdinand and his wife showed themselves exceedingly kind. Of people in office, on the contrary, the Heir-Apparent was suspicious; if, for instance, he had ordered that some of his people were to have gifts of money presented to them, he always asked them the next time he saw them :



“ And how much did you get ? And you ? ”

If the Heir-Apparent saw me in the street, he never waited for me to salute him, but always waved to me in friendly fashion.

In the Tyrol the Archduke was especially popular. There he was accustomed to going about among the population, and was fond of chatting and talking with people in the inns.

The servants of this noble couple, as has already been said, led the most comfortable of lives. On hunting trips the Archduke ate goulash (a highly seasoned kind of braised beef) brought from the nearest inn out of the same dish as his huntsmen, and joined with his hunting companions at the pieces of bread and the bacon which the loader produced, and presented in a piece of newspaper.

The Heir-Apparent was much interested in curios ; particularly in old cottage furnishings and hunting weapons, and even more especially in collecting carved wooden figures of St. George. He prowled around the premises of all the antique dealers in the Tyrol, bought Gothic furniture at Swateck's in Salzburg, cutlasses, hunting rifles and curios at Weissenbeck's in Munich, oil-paintings in Meran, Bozen and Innsbruck, along with old tin and copper vessels and such-like, so that he gradually acquired numberless beautiful and interesting articles, which were afterwards (in 1920) put up for auction in the Dorotheum and fetched ridiculously low prices.

Franz Ferdinand was also one of the finest shots in the Monarchy, and had splendid shooting both in Bohemia and at Blühnbach, Salzburg. Yet he was a crack shot rather than a hunter. Unlike his worthy

great-uncle, Francis Joseph, the Archduke cared less for the honest stalking of some fine stag or chamois than for bagging the greatest possible number of animals; but I have already told you various things in this connection in my chapter on Francis Joseph as hunter.

. . . . .

According to a very ancient hunting superstition a "white" chamois is sacred, and they say that he who kills a white chamois will die before the year has passed. At the end of August, 1913, the Heir-Apparent shot a snow-white chamois in the Gollinger Mountains, in spite of the huntsman's prayer to let the "fairy animal" go. Like a weight that knowledge lay over the Salzburg shooting-box, and in actual fact the old mountain saying came true in a terrible way.

It is interesting to know that the Heir-Apparent was perfectly well aware that the Serbs hated him like the plague. The Bulgarian Prime Minister, D. Danew, asserts that shortly before his assassination Franz Ferdinand said to him:

"The Serbs state that I am their greatest enemy. That is absolutely untrue, and as a proof of this I refer them to the happenings of the year 1908—at that time, when the Bosnian crisis had reached its highest point, and everybody was wanting to fall on Serbia, a country they could well have destroyed, I was one of the few who were against such a move."

Finally, I wish to refer also to a happening that caused anger and indignation. I feel it my duty to speak of the ceremonies at the burial of the Archduke,

because at the time rumours were spread abroad that Francis Joseph himself had, in a particularly obvious manner, given free rein to his antipathy to the Heir-Apparent after the Archduke's death. This statement is absolutely false, and could never in any case have been true, both in view of His Majesty's knightly character, and of the fact that he always took especial pains never to allow the populace the spectacle of possible troubles at Court. The truth of the matter is this : Prince Montenuovo, always the Heir-Apparent's bitter enemy, took advantage of Court usage, and arranged for a burial that, in its heart-breaking poverty, was bound to arouse indignation, more especially as the Heir to the Throne had died for his country.

Franz Ferdinand and his wife were buried with third-class ceremonial ! Princely Courts, and even Austrian official quarters, were informed that the presence of their delegates at the funeral was not desired. It may, according to Court ceremonial, have been felt necessary to impose some restrictions in view of the fact that his wife had not been the Archduke's equal by birth, but it was certainly contrary to these very rules that no church bells were tolled, no candle-bearers accompanied the procession, and that the coffins were not even borne by mules in accordance with the ancient rites.

Even the children of the dead couple were not allowed to follow the procession.

It is incredible that a ceremonial, so lavish in pomp, splendour and luxury, that seeks to make an impression precisely by those means, should have demanded anything so horrible and inhuman.

## CHAPTER XI

### FRANCIS JOSEPH'S RELIGION

**F**RANCIS JOSEPH was of a deeply religious nature, and believed with firm inner conviction in a Higher Providence, master of the fate of each separate individual and of the whole world. From that belief sprang the Emperor's fatalism! Apart from the fact that the expression "fear" was to him a thing unknown, he always said to himself that if no sparrow falls to the ground save at the will of God, then certainly a human being is still more surely in God's hand, and cannot lose his life unless it be the Lord's will that he do so. Consequently the Emperor scorned danger, and felt himself safe everywhere, be it from a murderer's weapon or from an infectious disease. Even on that first journey to the French Riviera I had proof of his entire lack of fear, for he sent home the special police who accompanied him, and from that time onward dispensed with the private detectives appointed to guard his safety. Just in the same way he forbade a double guard of sentries in Galicia, and once, when he was travelling there at a time when cholera was rampant, the royal physician, Dr. Kerzl, earnestly begged His Majesty not to take in his hands any petitions that might be handed into the carriage without having them disinfected, yet the Emperor

merely smiled and took the papers personally from the people handing them in. Then he himself put them into the big bag that was brought for that special purpose in the carriage, and only disinfected his hands on his arrival home.

In Vienna, too, even at the most critical times, he always drove through the city in an open carriage, and on journeys His Majesty's railway-coach was decorated with emblems and small flags, which pointed it out clearly to all and sundry.

There was also another reason for Francis Joseph's religion. Just as every human being feels the need to unbosom himself to someone to whom in times of trouble he can tell his griefs, so the Emperor felt that he must tell someone about the blows that fate dealt him. He, however, had no one to whom he could turn; no more powerful lord and protector stood above him; and so it is easy to understand that Francis Joseph fled to God, to his "Superior Officer," to his only "Chief": and just as each subordinate is responsible to his chief, so the Emperor felt himself responsible to God, for the well-being of his subjects, collectively and individually. For the same reason any man whose thoughts, aims and methods did not seem to the Emperor to be in accordance with that same well-being, was cast aside, no matter to what race or faith he belonged.

"Work too is Prayer," the Jesuits teach, and the motto chosen by Francis Joseph, "Service precedes Worship" is much to the same effect. A true son of the Catholic Church, Francis Joseph, like all the Habsburgs, was devout and pious without being a bigot; His Majesty was willing to let every man

reach Heaven by his own road, and showed a perfect tolerance to all denominations. On his journeys he visited Protestant as well as Jewish places of worship. The Emperor drew a very sharp dividing line between the religion and faith of the Catholic Church and its worldly institutions. Certainly in his letters to the Pope he called himself "The most obedient son of Your Holiness," but his relations with the higher clergy and priesthood were not very intimate. If they wished to see the Emperor, red-robed Cardinals had to ask for an audience just as other officials did, and Rome never had a strong political influence over Francis Joseph.

Francis Joseph began the day's work with a prayer, kneeling in his bedroom to offer his homage. He was most particular to keep the fast days, and to abstain from eating meat on Fridays and Ember Days. Members of his suite, however, were free to do as they chose, and to eat the meat dishes which, even on Fridays, appeared on the royal table.

Four times a year the Emperor went to confession, and on the days when he took Holy Communion he never had anything to eat or drink from the evening before—not even a sip of water. From Maundy Thursday onward during Holy Week the Emperor submitted himself to the exercises of the Church, and after Holy Mass on Ash Wednesday a priest was brought to his oratory to make the Sign of the Cross upon His Majesty's forehead with ashes.

The Emperor was particularly strict in keeping the fasts the week before Easter, and at that time ate only very little. This fasting began on the Wednesday of Holy Week. For breakfast on Easter Sunday there

stood on the table the foods blessed by the Court Chaplain: meat, ham, wild radishes and the traditional boiled lettuce; a plate of these was served also to every Court official and to the valets. At the family dinner all the members of the royal family found huge eggs placed at the side of their plates, with a little Easter lamb made of pastry and sugar. At Epiphany they received little figures of the "Three Wise Men of the East," and on the 6th December a tragacanth figure of St. Nicholas. During Easter Week the Emperor went twice daily to church—morning and afternoon. He also attended the Service of the Cross on Good Friday, and at Christmas the Three Holy Masses.

As early as the Wednesday before Easter little baskets came from the Convent of the Order of St. Elisabeth, each holding some thirty to forty coloured eggs. These the Emperor gave to me, saying:

"Just divide these amongst yourselves."

Apart from this there also came artificial Easter eggs, not intended for eating, which were saved.

The Jewish community of Pressburg sent to Martini each year the famous four geese, every bird weighing at least six kilogrammes (13 lbs.). Every year the deputation handed over the geese in the Chamber, and received in exchange a respectable sum of money. These geese, however, were not sent to the Court kitchen, but were divided between the three servants of the Privy Chamber, the fourth bird being given to one or other of His Majesty's huntsmen, so it was really to us that the Jewish community of Pressburg gave this most tasty present.

The Jews, however, had every cause for honouring His Majesty, for like all the Habsburgs he was well disposed toward them ; is it not equally impossible for a pious Catholic and for a ruler with a high sense of his responsible position to hold intransigent anti-Semitic views ?

Every year on Maundy Thursday, there took place the ceremony of the "Washing of Feet."

"The Twelve Apostles," a dozen of the oldest men in the kingdom, clad in pilgrim's hat and mantle, sat in a row ; in earlier years the Empress also washed the feet of twelve old women. On this day the Emperor, smartly clad in his gala-uniform (red trousers and white tunic) stood ready in his bedroom at six o'clock, pacing restlessly up and down, although the service preceding the washing of feet did not start until eight. When all the Archdukes, the Clergy, the Officials, the Court Chaplain and the Abbot of the Schottenkloster had arrived, and had taken their places in the procession, the Emperor handed his plumed hat to the Chief Chamberlain ; that was the signal for the twelve stewards and pages to bring in from the adjoining apartments the foods which were already prepared and arranged on trays. The Emperor took the wooden plates full of soup from the trays handed to him, and placed them with his own hands, along with other food and drink, before the "Apostles." Certainly the old men for the greater part never dared to make a start in the Emperor's presence—only one or two ever attempted to eat a few mouthfuls. The Archdukes then cleared the plates from the table and handed them to the twelve Life-Guardsmen who stood behind the dais, and



they in turn quickly removed the plates and dishes. The table was then carried out, and House officials began to remove the shoe and sock from the right foot of each "Apostle," whilst a long white strip of linen was laid over the old men's knees. The Emperor took off his gloves, the Court Chaplain stepped to the *prie-Dieu* and the assistants waved the censers; then the Emperor dropped to his knees, and so slid along, kneeling, from one "Apostle" to the next, right from one end of the row to the other, without rising. Two priests, kneeling, moved with the Emperor, one of them holding the can from which His Majesty poured the water over the old man's feet, under which the second priest held a silver basin. Then the Emperor stood up; a page handed him a basin and the Steward poured water over his hands; the Chief Grand Steward approached with a towel on a silver tray. Finally came the Treasurer, bearing—also on a silver tray—twelve white silken bags, fastened with black and yellow silk ribbons, each containing thirty silver crowns. Around the neck of each "Apostle" His Majesty hung one of the bags; then the old men were led from the room by Life-Guardsmen. Before they left, however, each received as a memento of the impressive ceremony a wooden vessel, a copy of the foot-bath, with a painted eagle adorning the outside, while the inside was filled with all kinds of Lenten foods and bottles of wine, and in addition each "Apostle" was permitted to carry away with him the tin mug in which his wine had been served, as well as the salt and pepper boxes.

Ascension Day and Corpus Christi were also celebrated with great splendour, the Corpus Christi

procession being probably the most colourful and gorgeous spectacle ever seen in old Vienna. Many of my readers will learn with surprise that Corpus Christi is not only a great Church holiday, but also a Festival of the Knightly Orders. The Church celebrates the transmutation of Christ's Body in the Host; the festival was instituted in the Middle Ages by Pope Urban IV, and is probably the most impressive feast of the Catholic Church. As a festival of the Knightly Orders it brought together the Knights of the Golden Fleece, the Knights of the Order of Stephen, of the Order of Leopold, of the Order of the Iron Crown, and of the Order of Francis Joseph.

The Emperor loved this festival, and he loved indeed all occasions which permitted him to appear in public, and quite early in the morning, if the weather was doubtful, His Majesty would look enquiringly at up the weather-cock on the Amalienburg, while the men in the stables and coach-house were just as greatly concerned on the same score. If the weather-cock promised "Emperor's Weather," His Majesty, dressed in Field-Marshal's uniform and displaying the ribbons and stars of the Grand Cross, and the band of the Maria Theresa Military Order, drove to the Cathedral of St. Stephen accompanied by the senior Archduke (formerly by the Crown Prince), in the gilded State coach, drawn by six horses. The other Archdukes followed him in a coach and four. At the side of the Emperor's coach rode the chief *aide-de-camp*, Major-General Count Paar, accompanied in his turn by his Adjutant, Baron Margutti, both anxiously endeavouring to calm their fiery steeds, which, on such occasions, were always

afflicted with an earnest desire to break loose and cause disorder in the ranks of the public who lined the roads and formed a living gangway. I remember particularly one occasion : during the procession, whilst these two officials walked by the Emperor, their horses waited in a side street near the Cathedral until the close of the service. Fretted by the long waiting, and the crowds of people, the *aide-de-camp's* horse sought revenge on his master as they went along the Graben on the way back, by making every effort to throw his rider. The Baron naturally did not feel it desirable to break his neck in his sovereign's presence and fought back. I, who saw all the manœuvring from quite near at hand, grew nervous merely from looking at the frightened horse, but the Baron was master, and remained in the saddle.

Speaking of horses, I must not forget those that drew the coaches on gala occasions. In accordance with true Spanish ceremonial, the horses drawing the Emperor and the Archdukes were pure-bred white Spanish, with costly harness ; coachmen and footmen wore powdered wigs, short breeches, black coats, buckled shoes, white stockings and huge three-cornered hats with gold braid and ostrich feathers. Undoubtedly one found it difficult to know what to admire the most.

When the detachments from the Hungarian Life-Guards, the Arcière Guards, and a Company of the Emperor's Own Infantry—the last-named called Castle gendarmes and mounted for this one occasion in the year—had saluted the Emperor with resounding music, His Majesty entered the Cathedral in stately procession, and in the gallery attended Holy Mass,

celebrated by the Cardinal Prince Archbishop. Afterwards the procession re-formed . . . a splendid spectacle without equal in the world. In front strode the Knights of the Austrian and Hungarian Orders, arranged according to the degree and age of the Order ; then came the high Church dignitaries, followed by the Cardinal Prince Archbishop who walked under a canopy, bearing the Holy Sacrament ; in his wake walked the Emperor, bareheaded, and carrying a lighted candle in his hand, whilst behind came the Archdukes, Officials, Lord Mayor and Councillors with other persons in public life.

The imposing procession wended its way through the centre of the city, halting for the Gospels to be read at the four Altars that had been erected. When the Cathedral of St. Stephen had been reached once more, the Emperor again stepped into the State Coach and drove back to the Hofburg, where, in the Inner Castle Square, he took the salute and watched the march past of the detachments that had been on duty—a custom preserved by tradition throughout a century.

The Eucharistic Congresses reminded one of the splendours of the Corpus Christi processions.

The first Congress was held in 1899. When the old Councils, of which the last was held in 1870, were no longer called, some means had to be found for the discussion of all questions of Church and State, and it was necessary that there should be meetings to which, in order to provide a broader basis, might be invited also secular priests and men learned in Church Law. Consequently, owing to the efforts of Cardinal Rampolla, the first Eucharistic Congress came into

being, and from that time onward such a Congress was called every few years.

In spite of the fact that the Papal Senate had decided that the Congress of 1912 should be held in Madrid, the Heir-Apparent, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, managed to arrange that it should be transferred to Vienna, and there it opened on the 8th September, lasting until the 14th September.

The Emperor was not sympathetic to this Congress simply because Franz Ferdinand had organised the matter over His Majesty's head. The Archduke wished to induce the Papal Senate to appoint as their representative the German Cardinal Fröhwrth ; when this, however, was refused, he proposed the Prince Archbishop of Breslau—a man who enjoyed Emperor Wilhelm's especial confidence, since during the great religious controversy (the "Kulturkampf") in Germany he had stood up to Bismarck. It would also have suited Franz Ferdinand to see the Archbishop of Munich, Dr. Faulhaber, as delegate, but this gentleman had made himself unpopular with the Papal Senate through his too thorough rendering of the rôle of "Church Militant," and finally Cardinal van Rossum was agreed upon as Papal Delegate, the Emperor afterwards conferring on him the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Stephen.

It was generally remarked that His Majesty singled out the English and French clergy, and received the French gentlemen in particular in private audience with the greatest kindness. Yet, in spite of that, these Congress days weighed upon us all, and we were glad when everything was over.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE EMPEROR'S TRAVELS

“**N**OW here—now there!” was the popular rendering in Berlin of the sound of Wilhelm II, the “Travelling Emperor’s” motor horn, yet signal and nickname both would have been just as apt for Francis Joseph, for there can be few rulers who have undertaken such numerous and lengthy journeys as did His Majesty. Not only did he travel in Germany, France, Roumania and Russia, but he also went to the East, though that was before my time. He was the guest of the Grand Seignior on the Golden Horn, and stayed in Athens and Jerusalem; he was also present in 1869 at the opening of the Suez Canal, that project, as is well known, owing much to the initiative of an Austrian, Ritter v. Negrelli-Moldelbe, whose only surviving son, by the way, is now living in the poorest of circumstances at Gmunden.

Whilst Wilhelm II travelled around urged by inner unrest, and with the morbid desire to be seen, Francis Joseph journeyed purely from a sense of duty. He never undertook trips for pleasure or relaxation; if he needed rest he preferred a hunting trip, but even so the Emperor kept to his programme of work just as strictly as in Vienna or Schönbrunn.

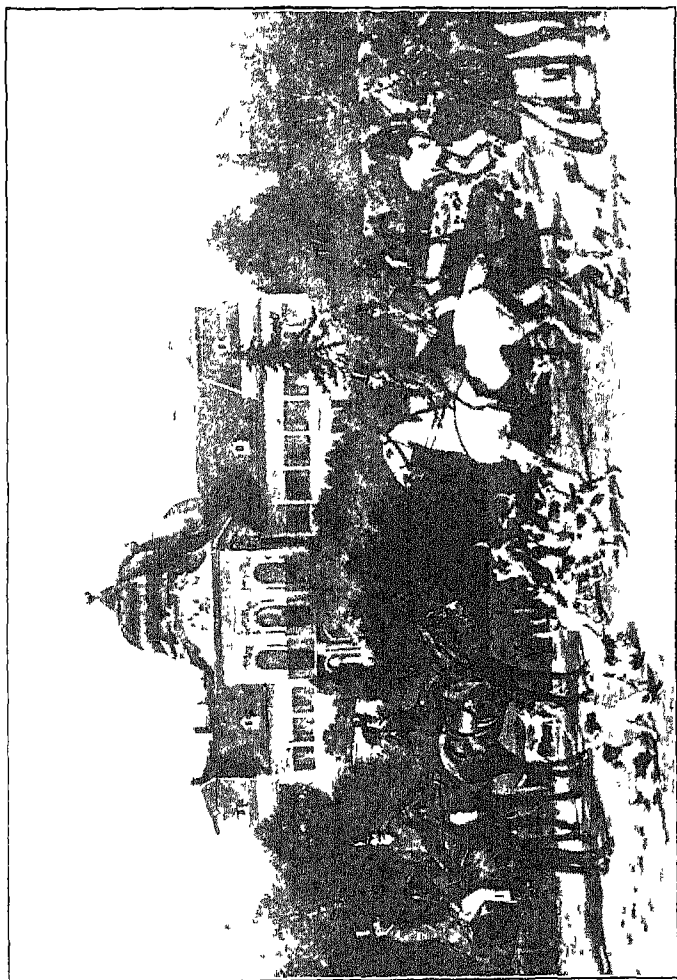
State and dynastic reasons, inspections and repre-

sentative duties were the things that necessitated most of the Emperor's journeys. Many a one seemed outwardly without importance, but for the province in question it was naturally of the greatest consequence.

Before I speak of the separate journeys I must mention one other point. For the Emperor's journeys there were five Court trains at his disposal: first, the "Old Austrian Court Train," which until February, 1898, did duty between Gödöllő and Budapest; then the "New Austrian Court Train," which the Austrian Railways placed at His Majesty's disposal in 1892, and which the Emperor always used when travelling with a large suite; further, the "Court Hunting Train," belonging to the Southern Railway, which was not, however, used during the last years. In addition there were the "Old Hungarian Court Train" and the "New Hungarian Court Train," both possessions of the Royal Hungarian State Railways, for journeys to and from Hungary and within the boundaries of the land of the Holy Crown of St. Stephen.

When I first began my duties everything that His Majesty took with him was packed in the so-called "Russian trunks"—great heavy wooden boxes with iron bands, for all the world like relics of the times of Wallenstein or Tilly. My first task was to dispose of these unwieldy things, and to replace them with elegant travelling bags, which went with us on the first trip to Cap Martin. Only for the manœuvres did the ancient monsters emerge again, for then there was at least some slight semblance of reason for using them, as with their solid build they could well withstand many a knock and bang.

THE MILLER AND MILLER AT CROTON, 1881







For journeys in Austria, for the manœuvres and such-like, the Emperor's coach was always decorated with little flags, eagles, the name of the train and the large coats of arms. On short journeys, for instance on hunting trips, to Ischl and Wallsee, only small badges appeared. Abroad, or in Hungary, the definitely Austrian emblems and the eagles were removed. The Emperor wanted the royal coach to be easily recognisable by all, so that from the highest officials down to the humblest Hungarian swineherd everyone should know where he could find the "Father of his Country."

On official journeys the train was coupled as follows: Immediately behind the engine came the baggage car, then the service coach for the railway officials accompanying the train. To this was attached the Emperor's coach, with His Majesty's sleeping apartment, and next door a compartment for me, as I was always lodged in the Emperor's immediate vicinity; then came the Emperor's study, and a small ante-room. At the other end of the coach was a compartment for the chief *aide-de-camp*, Count Paar, comfortably furnished with a sleeping couch and a small writing-desk, where the Count could dedicate himself without hindrance to the worship of his two great passions, sleep and smoking. In addition there was a small place for the Count's servant.

On private journeys the Emperor either ate alone, or with Count Paar and Prince Rudolf Liechtenstein in the study, the food being brought from the station restaurant wherever the train happened to stop about midday. I laid the table and waited upon the gentlemen; a dining-car only went along on

long-distance trips. Separated from the dining-room proper in the dining-car was the "Little Coffee House," where the "black drink" was taken, and where things were always most comfortable. On official journeys there were attached also various coaches for the gentlemen of the Court, *aides-de-camp*, and servants. The "Big Kitchen" was taken to the manœuvres only, for then there were often a great many guests at table. Two officials from the Ministry of Agriculture had to look after the commissariat; that is, they bought in the food on the way. In the early days, before there was electric light, an official and a servant of the "Lights' Department" went with us too; the official was, of course, quite superfluous, for naturally the servant did all the cleaning of the lamps and put fresh candles entirely on his own, but the officials naturally wanted to have their say—and a share in the salaries too.

In each coach there was also a "Coach Master," as the guards were called on Court trains; he kept order and regulated the temperature. These guards were provided by the railway company, and some of them had been performing the same duty for thirty years.

Sennhofer, His Majesty's barber, naturally went on all journeys. In order, however, not to get the man up at half-past three in the morning, His Majesty had his hair cut later in the day; when I once remarked that if we brought Sennhofer with us at all he might just as well serve the Emperor early, His Majesty said kindly, "Just let him sleep—I don't need him until afternoon."

. . . . .

Immediately after the close of the big manœuvres at Landskron the Emperor travelled on the 6th September, 1898, to open the Galician National Exhibition in Lemberg. Deputations from all the counties and towns, and a huge crowd of people, had come into the capital. Members of the Polish nobility flaunted their gaily-coloured, lively finery, whilst, clad in simple sheep-pelts and coarse dress came Ruthenians, Mazures, Huzules, Gorales, inhabitants of the wild Tatra and natives of the Bukowina; people had flocked even from far Roumania, and in the name of King Carol of Roumania came Prince Lahovary, bearing his royal master's greetings.

Everywhere—not only in Lemberg, but in other towns such as Lancut, Jaroslaw and Przemysl—the people surged up, fell upon their knees before the Emperor, and handed him their petitions. They desired to kiss his hands and his knees; but here again the high officials came between ruler and subjects; however much Francis Joseph would have liked to talk with the people, this was always prevented by some member of the suite jumping between them and pushing the public back. Governor Badeni, brother of the Prime Minister, was particularly zealous in endeavouring to undermine the Emperor's popularity.

In the neighbourhood of the Castle of the Counts Lubienski a charming little episode took place. Someone pointed out to the Emperor an old postilion, ninety-two years of age, who had driven the Emperor Franz I, and who had come from far-distant Radymno to gaze once more upon his sovereign and master. Francis Joseph talked to the still healthy veteran of

the glorious olden days of the post-chaise, brought him to the Castle as a guest, and finally gave him a handsome present of money.

In Bohemia, too, the Emperor was always joyously acclaimed, but he had no particular love for the Czechs, knowing full well that when the Crown Prince Rudolf had been stationed in Prague, they would have liked to make him their king. For that very reason the Crown Prince had at once been called back from Bohemia.

An old Saxon higher-grade teacher once told me the secret of how the Roman emperors managed the stupendous task of holding together, for hundreds of years, so many different races in one empire. To each tribe Rome left its own particular national characteristics: religion, customs, manners, speech and rulers—the one thing was, the people had to pay. Let the flags hoisted be white-red-green, white-red, or a brownish yellow; let “Hurrah!” and “Hoch!” be shouted in Celtic, German, Hebrew or Spanish—what difference did it make? “Tribute,” “Taxes,” the duty “to have no other enemies or friends than those of the Roman people”: those were the points of importance!

There lay the crux of the matter!

And Austria-Hungary? The people had to pay, sure enough, but that unfortunately was the only point the Austro-Hungarian policy had in common with the ancient Roman.

When we stayed in Prague in 1907 an honest master-tailor named Kvapil, who had somehow managed to get hold of the Emperor's measurements, asked to be allowed most humbly and respectfully to give His

Majesty a wonderful Marshal's full-dress uniform—red trousers and white tunic. The Emperor agreed, and in very truth, that uniform fitted His Majesty as if he had been poured into it. The Emperor, however, ordered me to look the tailor up and to find out what the man wanted, the only stipulation being that the imperial present must be worth three times the value of the uniform. I therefore got into communication with the sartorial artist, and discovered that he would like to have a watch, whereupon I informed the Court Secretary, Nepallek, of the tailor's desire and His Majesty's orders. Nepallek fought tooth and nail against buying such an expensive watch, and only when I threatened to tell His Majesty did the Secretary pick out a few chronometers, which were placed before the Emperor—who immediately chose the most costly one.

In Prague everything was beautiful, and the reception, too, had pleased the Emperor mightily; but on the journey that followed, the further we got into the Bohemian forests, the more the picture changed. From Aussig onwards the "*Gott erhalte*" (Austrian National Anthem) sounded no more; in its place we heard the Czech hymn "*Kde domov můj*," but never a German song again. In the stations in ranks stood the "*Sokols*," or young people's associations, and the speeches of greeting and protestations of loyalty were in the Czech tongue. When this happened at one station after the other, the Emperor at last swung round, got into the coach again, and without any leave-taking travelled on, "raging." This was done so quickly and unexpectedly that the Emperor was sitting in his place again before we quite

knew what had happened, and we who had also descended had to tumble in anyhow, head over heels, as the train began to steam from the station !

This occurrence made a very bad impression indeed on the Czechs, and was little likely to draw tighter the bands uniting the Czech people to the Austrian Royal House. The Czechs felt that they had been brusquely treated, and were wounded in their national pride. Yet, untroubled by national struggles, Prague was always faithful to the House of Habsburg, and when at the National Exhibition on the 26th September, 1891, the Emperor in his speech said :

“ Let the success of this Exhibition induce the nation to use all its strength for the further glorious development of this wonderful land, which, richly blessed by Providence, will reach complete prosperity only through the united work of the two races labouring together as one. . . .”

The masses of the people, deliriously excited, applauded as if they would never stop.

. . . . .

In 1897 the Emperor went to Russia. Up to the frontier His Majesty used the Austrian royal train, and then changed into the Russian one. The Russian railways are wider-gauged than any others in Europe ; the rolling-stock has adjustable axles, so that it can be run also over our track. In the Russian court train one coach was exactly like the next ; the “ concertina ” connecting passages between the coaches were so wide, too, that from a distance the whole train appeared to be one single, long coach. Thus there was no difference whatever between that

part of the train intended for the Emperor and the rest, which certainly seemed wise, for even in his own country the "Little Father of all the Russians" could never be sure of his personal safety; consequently, in complete opposition to our own system, nobody was to know where the Czar was to be found.

In each carriage there hung a picture of the Czentschou Black Madonna, for the Russians are a very pious race, although they are not prevented by their piety from prizing earthly pleasures!—vodka, for instance. In the dining-car stood a buffet with a goodly array of titbits and *hors d'œuvres*, at which one pecked before the meal proper in order to get an appetite. After the Emperor and his suite had eaten, the table was re-set and the Russian servants, who could all speak German and all came from the neighbourhood of Riga—that district renowned for its fidelity to the Crown—served to the personal servants exactly the same meal that had been set before the nobles of the very highest rank.

All the way from Warsaw to St. Petersburg fine bird-sand had been strewed for a distance of 1.50 metres at each side of the track, so that any suspicious footmark might be noticed at once. During the whole of the twenty-four-hour journey we never saw a single human being, but now and again a melancholy stork strutted over the fields.

The Emperor seemed to me to be nervous. Was he bored, or did the journey into this land of Nihilists and bombs worry him? Immediately after dinner he went to lie down. I wondered if he were ill, but as a matter of fact he was merely rather bored and a bit excited. In St. Petersburg there was a splendid



reception, followed by a parade on the Soldiers' Field. As Colonel-in-Chief of the Keksholm Guards Foot-Regiment, Francis Joseph led his men on the march past the Czar, then swerved off at a gallop to take up his stand at the Czar's right. The Emperor rode his own horse which had travelled in advance escorted by His Majesty's head groom.

Cossacks then executed various movements, stood on the backs of their horses, leaned over close to the ground, holding on to the saddle with one leg only, and at the end fifty-two squadrons, that is some five thousand men, charged right at the royal couple—a dazzling attack—only to pull their horses up sharp on their haunches quite close to Their Majesties.

After the Emperor had visited the Czarina in the Winter Palace he returned to his apartments, accompanied by the Czar. There were long corridors to traverse. Their Majesties were preceded by men-servants, corresponding to the old Austrian *salon* footmen, wearing on their heads a kind of feather crown. At every door a soldier stood on guard, each announcing his presence with a loud voice when the two rulers were about six steps away, so that the corridors were filled with an ear-splitting din. The Czar jumped and twitched with nervousness, and seemed quite unbalanced from excitement and fear. Continually he looked around in all directions.

To our Emperor was allotted a handsome Lieutenant of the Infantry Guard, who could scarcely wait until the breakfast table was set once again; when it was, he jumped to it at once, to make a hearty attack on the baked caviar-wafers, which were thin, soft pastry spread thickly with caviar.

This Lieutenant had no duties to perform; all he was expected to do was to be there and to stand about.

In the morning I took the liberty of drawing His Majesty's attention to the sentries, who were posted on the very roofs. In the cellars whole regiments were on guard duty. Every sentry had a thick chain round his neck, and this he handed over to the man relieving him, when the sentries were changed.

At Easter the sentries kissed one another when the guard was changed. When the two sovereigns passed, the sentries did not stand at attention, but crossed their arms over their chests and made "deep bows from the hips forward."

The Czar's private cook asked for permission to make our Emperor a present, which took the form of a Russian Court speciality: a kind of biscuit that never gets stale or hard. When these biscuits get old and dry they are moistened with water and re-heated, when they once more become wonderfully crisp. I brought in such an enormous number of these biscuits that I was quite hidden behind the mound on the tray. The Emperor took quite a pile of these tasty little things back with him to Vienna for the Empress and Frau v. Schratt.

As the tailor had done in Bohemia, so in Russia a shoemaker asked for permission to deliver something to His Majesty and to be appointed purveyor to the Court. The Emperor granted the request, but afterwards the matter was overlooked, and six months passed before the man had his title confirmed by telegram. As a matter of fact, he had written to me, and I laid his letter before the Emperor.

"It is simply outrageous that the man should have been forgotten! Francis Joseph cried; and Prince Liechtenstein was severely reprimanded.

During his stay in St. Petersburg the Emperor attended to the usual business of State, the documents being brought each day by a courier from Vienna. In front of the palace, however, the bag was taken from the courier, and in the presence of our ministerial officials and cabinet secretaries, who had travelled with us, and of the Russian Court Marshal, Prince Tatschkow-Worinzow, was examined and opened, to see whether it contained bombs or infernal machines!

In the Emperor's suite on the journey to St. Petersburg in 1897 there were, in addition to Count Paar, also Prince Montenuovo and Baron Bolfras.

I would like to mention one detail more, because it struck me particularly. When I was driving from the Winter Palace to the fortress of Peter and Paul, the crowds of people gazed curiously at my carriage—and the Cossack detachment escorting me simply rapped them over the head with their nagaikas!

. . . . .

From the Czarina His Majesty received a small gold ornament in the form of an egg, as the Russian Easter was just over, and from the Czar the Golden Badge of Honour of his Keksholm Regiment.

"Those two things are presents to me," said His Majesty, "and we'll take them back with us." Yet when I went through the luggage the next day both egg and badge had vanished completely; I told the Emperor of this misfortune, but he was not at all angry, though I myself was very upset.

"We cannot do anything about it," he remarked, "but the medal will simply have to be reproduced in Vienna."

The Emperor Francis Joseph had stayed in St. Petersburg before, in 1874. That time a bear hunt had been held in his honour—on the 18th February to be precise—and His Majesty laid low a splendid specimen at a distance of eighty paces with a masterly shot in the head. The foreign newspapers all gave detailed accounts, and the *Times* added the comment that this was the first bear that the Emperor of Austria had ever shot. However, that was a mistake, for even at that early date a memorial tablet had been placed in the forest near the little Galician town of Stryj, to commemorate His Majesty's shooting of a fine, full-grown bear.

. . . . .

At the end of September 1896 we travelled to Roumania, being accompanied from Orsova onward by King Carol. Our Emperor was an intimate friend of King Carol and of the Poetess-Queen, Carmen Sylva, and the King had been His Majesty's guest in Vienna only a month before.

Probably gratitude on the part of the Roumanian King had been a factor in the proposed visit, for when it had not appealed to many of the foreign powers to see a Hohenzollern on the throne of Roumania, our Emperor had come warmly to the support of Karl of Hohenzollern, who had then been crowned. And now, in order to show other nations that Austria-Hungary looked upon the Kingdom of Roumania as an equal great power, His Majesty decided to pay an

official visit, accompanied by a large suite, to the King Carol who had in actual fact made his new country great. An excellent opportunity offered when on the 25th September, 1897, the Danube Channel was opened at Orsova. Here, at the Iron Gate, numberless reefs, rocks and points barred the river passage at low water, and already two thousand years before the Romans under the Emperors Trajan and Tiberius had tried to make the dangerous place navigable. In 1833 Count Stephen Szechenyi worked energetically on the question, but it was 1884 before an international company, backed by the necessary capital, took the execution of the project properly in hand; and then it took fourteen years to complete the work. Now, with great pomp and ceremony, the "free" Danube was to be declared open by Emperor Francis Joseph, King Carol of Roumania and King Alexander of Serbia. Never in living memory had the little town of Orsova seen such a number of visitors, come from all directions in order to be present at this splendid spectacle. Dense crowds of Serbian, Hungarian, Bulgarian and Roumanian citizens lined the banks to view the ship carrying the Emperor, the King and the great nobles and statesmen. During the night of the 25th to the 26th September there shone reflected in the Danube's mirror-like surface also the splendid white steamer *Franz Josef I*, escorted by a gunboat and the monitor *Körös*. The royal ship was followed by two others, carrying the high dignitaries of State, Church and Army, with other officials. The tug *Vaskapu* towed the royal steamer, whilst the *Radetzky* and the *Srinyi*, with the members of the European Danube

Commission and the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on board, brought up the rear. A cable stretched from shore to shore represented the "last obstacle," and now from the poop of the royal vessel this too was set aside. Simultaneously on both banks cannon and guns thundered, and the glad shouts of the assembled people rang out. On the royal steamer the three monarchs raised their champagne-filled glasses, drinking together to the welfare and prosperity of their peoples and lands.

King Alexander attempted to make a speech, but came to a stop every minute or two, so that he was relieved when our Emperor, by raising his glass again, rendered further efforts at oratory unnecessary.

After the ceremonial opening, our Emperor and King Carol continued their journey. His Majesty was given a right royal welcome to Roumanian soil; from Orsova to Bucharest the railway was lined by three army corps—infantry, cavalry and artillery—in parade formation, and at every station came farmers clad in their picturesque national costume, bringing brightly decorated baskets containing white pigeons. I took all the pigeons into the compartment, and only freed them at Budapest, where for days afterwards they flew round the Königsberg.

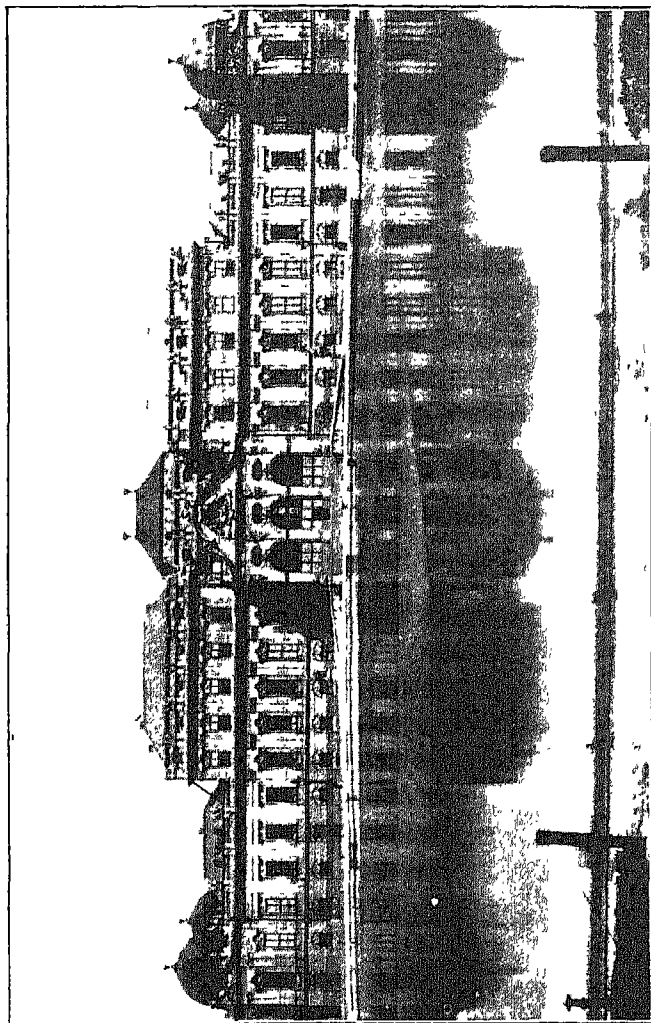
My reception by Carmen Sylva was enchanting; immediately on our arrival I was called to her boudoir, where she enquired regarding my illustrious master's wishes, and then gave me a rug that she was holding spread over her knees. The Emperor told me later that the Queen herself had worked this rug, which

was very valuable on account of the real gold and silver used in its ornamentation. The next day the Emperor visited the marvellously beautiful Crown Princess Marie, and then we travelled further, to stay at the splendid palace at Sinaia. In this fairy-like building, lying in the midst of wonderful pine-woods, there were long corridors strangely out of keeping with the other glories of the palace, for their monotony was only broken here and there by what appeared to be cupboards in the wall. As the Emperor was walking with King Carol down these corridors he asked whether there was not some communication with the rooms; then King Carol opened one of the cupboard-doors, and it turned out that this was merely a disguised entrance to the apartments alongside.

It is well known that the standard of singing in the German army is very high; even in very early times the Romans reported that the Germans went into battle singing and praising in song the deeds of their forefathers and warriors. King Carol, a scion of one of the oldest Swabian princely houses, had taken this custom with him and had instilled it into his Roumanian soldiers. That first evening in Sinaia the troops serenaded our Emperor, and sang our glorious national anthem "*Gott erhalte*" in Roumanian, a greeting which moved our Emperor deeply and gave him sincere pleasure.

Wherever the Emperor went among Roumanians and Ruthenians he was given bread and salt on his arrival—which the Queen insisted that he should taste.

. . . . .



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Francis Joseph was not only Emperor of Austria, but also Hereditary Count of Tyrol. Tyrol, the crown-land that clung with unequalled love and faith to the House of Habsburg; Tyrol, whose mountains rear their heads to the clear sky, and whose inhabitants, beneath a rough exterior, shelter child-like spirits and modest, pious characters; Tyrol, that in ancient and modern days has sacrificed blood and life itself for the Emperor; this Tyrol—but badly repaid for faith and constancy—was preparing to receive the Emperor. It was after the manœuvres at Klagenfurt, at which the Heir-Apparent, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was also present, that the Emperor went to Meran to attend the ninety years' Andreas Hofer celebrations, held in 1899. The journey was a triumphal progress. His Majesty had tiring days behind him, and more tiring days ahead, so, on my advice, he drank a glass of brandy—a drink which the Archduke liked as well.

“Give me another glass,” said His Majesty; adding, after he had emptied his third:

“After this I may yet in my old days become a tippler in private!”

As a matter of actual fact, the Emperor was so elated that, from the frontier at Lienz onward, he descended from the train at every station, shook hands with everybody without waiting for the presentations, and even walked up beyond the engine to greet the assembled crowds. That would have been an utter impossibility with Francis Joseph without the brandy; and we were two hours late getting to Meran. Never before had I seen my royal master so gracious and condescending. In Meran the

Emperor stayed in the castle of his brother, Karl Ludwig, Rottenstein; Karl Ludwig, the father of "Ferdinand Burg."

There were great celebrations that evening in Meran, and on the Küchelberg, where the battles under Andreas Hofer had been fought, enormous bonfires flared. The Emperor had been on his feet all the day, having left Klagenfurt in the early morning; no wonder the sixty-nine-year-old gentleman felt tired. Then there was the Vienna mail to be dealt with, but I dared to protest that that was really too much—the work ought to be spread over a longer time. The Emperor, however, shook his head:

"A man should work until he drops, for only then has he done his duty. The courier can fetch the documents early to-morrow morning, and so that I get finished in time, I must simply get up a bit earlier."

"Earlier" meant—three o'clock!

The next day the Emperor, wearing the uniform of his Royal Chasseurs, drove in a carriage through the Passeiertal to the inn of Andreas Hofer in St. Leonhardt. At Mandl, that very ancient place, old "Jokele," who was over a hundred, had come down from the mountains to see his sovereign; the Emperor chatted with this old fellow who, as a ten-year-old boy, had actually spoken to Andreas Hofer. The Emperor ordered that a considerable present of money should be given to "Jokele."

Ten years later old "Jokele" had passed on to his eternal home, but his Emperor—a young man of seventy-nine—stood once again, vigorous and fresh

as of yore, on the soil of Tyrol. In that year, 1909, the centenary of Andreas Hofer was celebrated. At Innsbruck the Emperor stood on the dias erected before the Castle for more than three and a half hours, while the endless pageant filed past him. Quite unexpectedly and spontaneously an honest Tyrolese stepped from the ordered ranks and handed to His Majesty a wonderfully made crown of edelweiss, a replica, exact in every detail, of the Austrian, with the blunt words :

“It’s a bit heavy, Your Majesty ! ”

“Well, at least you see now that it is not such a light thing to wear a crown as some folk think,” retorted the Emperor promptly.

There were no soldiers on guard but a detachment of the Passeier Archers—very straight, fine-looking fellows—for the Tyrolese wished to guard their prince themselves. The next day, exactly as happens in Vienna with the Hofburg sentries, these men were relieved, and the flag was handed over to the Wiltener Archers (Wilten, near Innsbruck). The officers of these corps, although no longer men in the first flush of youth, were, one and all, particularly strong and hearty. They were invited to the royal table, and there one honest fellow drank the finger-bowl dry, apparently under the impression that it held something particularly good. The Wilten men were not so soldierly and smart at the Passeier detachment, whose members were more imposing both in uniform and carriage.

The next morning we all journeyed back to Vienna, every man dead tired.

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In connection with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina we went at the beginning of June, 1910, to Sarajevo, the most far-reaching and strict precautions having been taken to ensure my illustrious master's safety. In spite of the sweltering heat and his eighty years, the Emperor mounted his horse and set off at a sharp gallop to join the waiting escort, so that he might take the salute of the troops under the command of the General of Infantry Moritz, Ritter von Auffenberg.

It so happened that on this occasion the General dropped his sword, which accident gave rise to the most varied prophecies. After the review, one of the most splendid ever held by the old army, His Majesty returned once more at a sharp gallop to the exit of the parade-ground, and then drove straight back to the Konak.

That was the first time that the troops, both officers and men, appeared in the pike-grey (really pigeon-grey) uniform.

In Sarajevo the Emperor visited the monastery, the principal mosque and the bazaar, whilst Moslems, Catholics and Serbians competed to show His Majesty their veneration and gratitude. From Sarajevo the Emperor drove to see Ilidze Spa, and then on to Mostar. In Metkovic we broke the journey, as a wire came from Vienna to the effect that Count Zeppelin was arriving with his airship.

Four years later no shouts of "Zivio!" arose to greet the Heir-Apparent; no royal troops, no squads of detectives guarded the life of that great gentleman. Instead revolver shots cracked, the signal for the wholesale murder of nations. The first of the fallen

of the Great War, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, lay dead.

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Francis Joseph had often stayed in Germany, but before my time ; in 1889 in Berlin, visiting the then "young" Emperor Wilhelm II, and later in 1890 when the manœuvres were held in Silesia, on the historic site of the battle of Leuthen. Those were the days when brotherly feelings between Austria and German reached their highest point, and the bearing of the Prussian and German officers to their Austrian and Hungarian comrades was the kindest and most friendly imaginable. Our Emperor's good horsemanship aroused universal admiration, for he took part in even the sharpest cavalry exercises.

In 1895 the Emperor went to Germany again—and this time I was there too—in order to be present at the great cavalry review. His Majesty was Colonel-in-Chief of the 6th Royal Prussian Hussars, but wore the uniform of his Prussian Guard Infantry Regiment, the "Franzer." His Majesty was officially received at the famous Wildparkstation, near Berlin, the rendezvous of the Prussian kings when they set off for the manœuvres, or for hunting excursions. Everywhere Francis Joseph was surrounded and cheered by the Prussian people, and Wilhelm II, who could be most charming, greeted him as a son might greet his father after a long absence. It was on that visit that the Kaiser conferred upon our Emperor the rank of Prussian Field-Marshal.

The march past of fifty squadrons, that is, ten regiments, brought the manœuvres to a close. He

who has once seen German cavalry on parade will never forget the imposing, really overwhelming and glorious picture. A German cavalry regiment is composed of five squadrons of one hundred and twenty riders each. Every man carries a steel lance, 10 feet 3 inches in length, and on its tip flutters a pennant of the colours of the country in question : Prussia, black-white ; Bavaria, white-blue—colours that flashed brightly and joyously. The troops paraded at walk, trot or gallop. In front of each regiment rode the buglers with the bandmaster, the trumpet-major at the head, playing a march, no matter how quick the pace might be ; to manage this, the bandsmen sat on their reins. Opposite to the person taking the salute the band wheeled ; the bandmaster raised his silver bugle, the strains of the march died away, and immediately afterward the band began to play the regimental march ; then when that particular regiment had filed past, the bandsmen followed at a gallop and the band of the regiment following took up the position of their predecessors.

This time the parade was at a gallop. The ten regiments—fifty squadrons—stood in line, one squadron behind the other, with lances at the ready, that is upright, the butts resting in their sockets at the stirrup. Into the far distance stretched a shimmering sea of glittering weapons and a gaily coloured forest of lances—certainly they covered a distance as great as that from the Praterstern to the Comedy Theatre in Vienna. Cuirassiers with silver helmets surmounted by eagles, Hussars with bright-coloured attilas, Blue Dragoons and Uhlans with epaulettes and straps, and with caps perched jauntily on the

right ear, all on great shining horses, stormed past in absolutely even ranks, each squadron flashing by to the sound of the bugles as one man. Wave after wave of Lancers rolled up, then receded again wrapped in dense clouds of dust, and so followed fifty squadrons some hundred paces apart. The earth trembled under the hoofs of more than five thousand horses; in the air thundered the clash of arms, mingling with the sound of lively cavalry regimental airs.

The Kaiser himself led the first regiment, the renowned 7th Halberstadt Cuirassiers or "Bismarck Cuirassiers," with their white tunics and gold facings, past his illustrious guest, whilst Francis Joseph rode at the head of his 6th Prussian Hussars, "the Blues," with silver facings.

At these autumn manœuvres, held on the extensive fallow lands near Stettin, King Albert of Saxony and (as representative of the King of Italy) the Count of Turin were also present. All the foreign papers drew special attention to the respect and courtesy with which the Italian prince was treated.

On the 4th May, 1900, we again went to Berlin, this time for the coming of age of the German Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, whom our Emperor liked very much. In 1898 we stayed in Kissingen, where the Emperor spent three weeks with the Empress Elisabeth, who suffered from her heart and was so ill that, after walking only a few steps, she had to sit down again. All day long His Majesty kept her company.

Naturally our Emperor was fond of staying often in Munich, for was not his mother a Bavarian princess, and did not the closest ties of relationship



bind him to the honourable and princely House of Wittelsbach ?

Christmas Francis Joseph always spent at Wallsee, but the next day he went to visit his elder daughter, Princess Gisela, in Munich where the celebrations of the Christmas festivities was always postponed until His Majesty's arrival.

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In 1916 the Emperor took his last journey—the journey to the Vaults of the Church of the Capucines. Once more I attended him, but when we reached the tomb I had to leave my beloved sovereign alone. Do the dead ever return ?

Surely when we meet again Eugen Ketterl will once more respectfully report for duty as His Majesty's devoted and loyal *valet de chambre*.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ROYAL MANŒUVRES

SOME words are like human voices. There are times when a certain voice sounds friendly, clear, victorious, and other times when that same voice seems provoking, obtrusive and unpleasant. Its effect is dependent upon our mood, our frame of mind and our experiences.

Just such a word, that in the passing of years has quite changed in its effect upon us, is "*manœuvres*." We remember the days of peace, when this word had a happy, cheerful, lively sound. One quite forgot that it was but a full-dress rehearsal for murderous war. For the rank and file the manœuvres meant a change; the men went to different districts, made new friends, and for a while breathed the fresh air of adventure. Every rustic and stable-boy felt himself a real soldier. The regular officers, too, were glad of this opportunity of proving to those people who considered their calling but a useless and expensive playing at soldiers, that their "*game*" could have its serious side. Officers of the Reserve came from their civilian callings, exchanging office dress and evening clothes for the bright two-coloured uniforms, and when the manœuvres were over they could sit around and tell the tale of their war-like adventures. It was only to a very few people at the

head, that the manœuvres did not represent a cheerful game. What they had planned and worked out in theory for years on end, was now to be put to the practical test; for them the manœuvres were also the arbitrament of fate, for upon their result might depend a career. To Francis Joseph the manœuvres were a serious, solemn time; they gave him the chance of judging the qualities of his army, they reminded him of the sad past, and warned him of the grave possibilities of the future. The Emperor even in normal times disapproved of pomp and luxury, being satisfied with little, like a modest citizen, but at the manœuvres his demands were so small as to be almost incredible.

Francis Joseph was a soldier through and through.

It is true that in the last years his interest in the army manœuvres waned very considerably, for modern warfare did not interest him—one saw too little. Certainly the underground war of attrition that we saw in 1914–1918 was not then being practised, but even then the usage of trenches had become a point to be considered. “One only sees the *débâcle*,” His Majesty said once, “but never the manœuvres!” Adding: “And this new method is much more tiring for the troops, too.” The old soldier could not get to feel at home at the manœuvres any more; he wanted to be in the midst of his men, to ride with them in the ranks or to the attack.

At the autumn manœuvres everything was done very simply. Since once in Zircz in Hungary a wooden bedstead had collapsed completely under him, His Majesty always slept on an iron bedstead that we took with us.

Usually all members of the Emperor's suite, officers and regimental commanders were invited to the royal table. The white-spread tables were narrow boards resting on trestles; the dressers were the same. The cutlery used at the manœuvres had wooden handles—only that intended for His Majesty's use was of electro-plate. Dishes and plates were of white enamel, dating, as did the other manœuvre appointments, including the tent, from the time of Archduke Albrecht, who, actuated by the desire that everything should be plentiful and aristocratic, had paid all this outlay out of his own pocket!

When in 1895 the Emperor used for the first time the tent inherited from Archduke Albrecht, he made the following speech:

"Gentlemen, to-day, when, as host, I see you assembled around me for the first time, let us remember him who previously sat in this place, and solemnly swear to work faithfully in accordance with the wishes of the one who has passed on. We must advance, but the spirit must remain the same!" Thus everything was left as it had been in Archduke Albrecht's time, the Emperor taking over servants, cooks, ovens and appointments. On the table stood great two-litre bottles of white and red wine, and anyone could drink as much as he wanted; beer was also served.

The manœuvres cost the Emperor untold money, but he wanted money to circulate among the people, and for them to earn. Certainly the expenses of the autumn manœuvres were borne by the State, but the Emperor paid for what he used for himself or for his guests. If the State allowance was insufficient, His

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Majesty never suggested an increase, but always paid the deficit from his Privy Purse. Very often the expenses ran to two million crowns a month.

Lunch was at two o'clock. The Emperor took the same as his suite and attendants: beef, pork or lamb roast, minced ham, dumplings, dessert and coffee. We never had pie—that would have been too aristocratic. In the evening there were soup and meat with extras. Wine and beer were always *ad libitum*. Officers who were late for any reason had a meal served afterward.

The long days in the fresh air and the physical exercise naturally increased the appetite tremendously, and there were great feats at the trencher; there must be many a one who, even to-day remembers those “fleshpots of Egypt.”

The Emperor was fond of listening to the officers' lively conversation, but would not permit any obscenity or jokes with double meanings. His Majesty did not lie down either before or after the exercises, but merely changed his clothes when he came in, took a few bites and then sat down at once to attend to the mail that had come in.

His Majesty left at seven in the morning to ride to the grounds where the manœuvres were being held, and came back just before eleven o'clock. So little service did he demand that he never took any breakfast with him, and on his return would never of his own accord have asked for some; however, I always saw to it that there was butter, bread, tea and ham ready.

For the manœuvres Francis Joseph always had two mounts, one of them a perfectly trained animal for such

work, absolutely surefooted and free from fear—one of His Majesty's favourites. Such horses naturally had to be very easy-gaited and quite accustomed to noise and crowds. The Emperor never allowed one of his horses to be beaten or punished, and when once a naval officer, a certain Captain Höhnel, fetched one of the Emperor's mounts a cut with the whip because it had stepped into a hole, His Majesty, very annoyed, turned round and said :

“ Why whip the poor beast ? He cannot help it ! ”

The Head Groom, Lechatier, rode the Emperor's horses over the manœuvre ground a few days before, so that the beasts might get to know the lie of the land, the hollows, holes and ditches ; fortunately so, for it once happened at the manœuvres held in the neighbourhood of Totis (1899) that the Emperor—then sixty-nine years old—urged his mare on ahead of his suite at a very quick pace, and thus came unexpectedly upon a broad ditch. The cry of, “ Look out, Your Majesty ! There's a ditch ! ” came too late, His Majesty's mount had already taken the obstacle. Although quite unprepared, Francis Joseph, who right into a ripe old age was a splendid and courageous rider, kept his seat.

The Emperor stood cold and heat equally well. In 1894, at the beginning of July, His Majesty was in Trient on the occasion of a review of the troops, and stayed at the Hotel Trento, going thence to Madonna di Campiglio to visit the Empress. The heat was of tropical intensity, but the Emperor did not appear at all troubled by it. Neither did he complain of the heat when he went over the troopships at Pola, and went below where there was a temperature of



40° C. (about 105° F.). At that time he stayed on board the yacht *Miramar*. He had not the same love for the sea as had Wilhelm II—Francis Joseph much preferred to hunt the stag and the mountain-goat over his green domains.

His Majesty liked to chat with the country folk he met on the road, and when he came home the chief groom would tell me how affable and gracious our master had been.

The Emperor had a really splendid memory. Whenever people were presented to him, His Majesty invariably knew all about each one, because he had already noted their names, rank, etc., on the lists which had been previously placed before him.

On the 28th August, 1905, His Majesty, who had been staying at the Hotel Kaiserkrone in Bozen for the Sacred Heart celebrations, had gone on to Romeo for the manœuvres. There he took up his quarters in the barracks of the Gendarmerie, but as a suitable room inside was lacking, meals were taken outside in the manœuvre tent. When His Majesty was going to dinner in the evening, he heard a bugler of the main detachment of the guard blow the retreat wonderfully well; he approached the officer on duty, and said:

“Where is that bugler?”

Scared to death, the officer called the “tin-whistler,” and the Emperor clapped the man on the back, remarking:

“You played that beautifully.”

Then His Majesty ordered the bugler to be appointed regimental trumpeter, a promotion for which the honest fellow would otherwise have had to wait many a long year.

On that occasion Conrad v. Hötzenndorf commanded an army corps for the first time, Archduke Eugen being in a similar important post, while it was also the first time that the newly acquired machine-guns came into action.

Near Güns the Emperor took part in a great cavalry charge ; he was then sixty-eight years of age. Often he remained in the saddle seven hours at a stretch ; having dismounted he would stand upright and fresh, slapping at his riding-boots with his quirt, and smiling contentedly to himself to see his *aides-de-camp* looking stiff and bent—he was not tired in the slightest !

The same autumn His Majesty accepted the invitation of Kaiser Wilhelm II to be present at the manœuvres near Stettin, and was very warmly welcomed by the German people.

The execution of the various evolutions by the Prussian troops is said to have been absolutely perfect. I, who have never been a soldier, cannot give a personal opinion. Things were less brilliant, however, where the Prussian commissariat was concerned. For his midday meal my revered master had soup—an indefinite kind of brew—beef that had been cooked—woefully over-cooked—and beer. Consequently the next morning I felt compelled to inform the steward and the chief cook that my master was accustomed to a somewhat more varied menu. The effect of this, however, was nil. Again the terrible soup and the ancient cow appeared, so that from then on I had the food brought from the hotel at the cost of twenty marks.

Two years later Kaiser Wilhelm came to our big

manceuvres at Tata-Tovaros. His Majesty himself met his illustrious guest at the station. I had already seen that the Emperor was not in the best of moods ; first his ill-humour was vented on the guard of honour drawn up at the station ; the gangway was not as he liked it, the space allowed being too narrow, whilst the bugler was standing in the line, instead of behind. His Majesty descended from the carriage himself because the *aide-de-camp* was not quick enough, and made the arrangements he desired.

The officers responsible were severely reprimanded. When they were presented to him Kaiser Wilhelm shook each one by the hand, a proceeding which affected our Emperor unpleasantly.

At the manoeuvres at Tata-Tovaros Kaiser Wilhelm once asked for champagne. The Chief of the Austrian General Staff, Baron Beck, thought that it would be quite a good thing to have some served, but Francis Joseph replied :

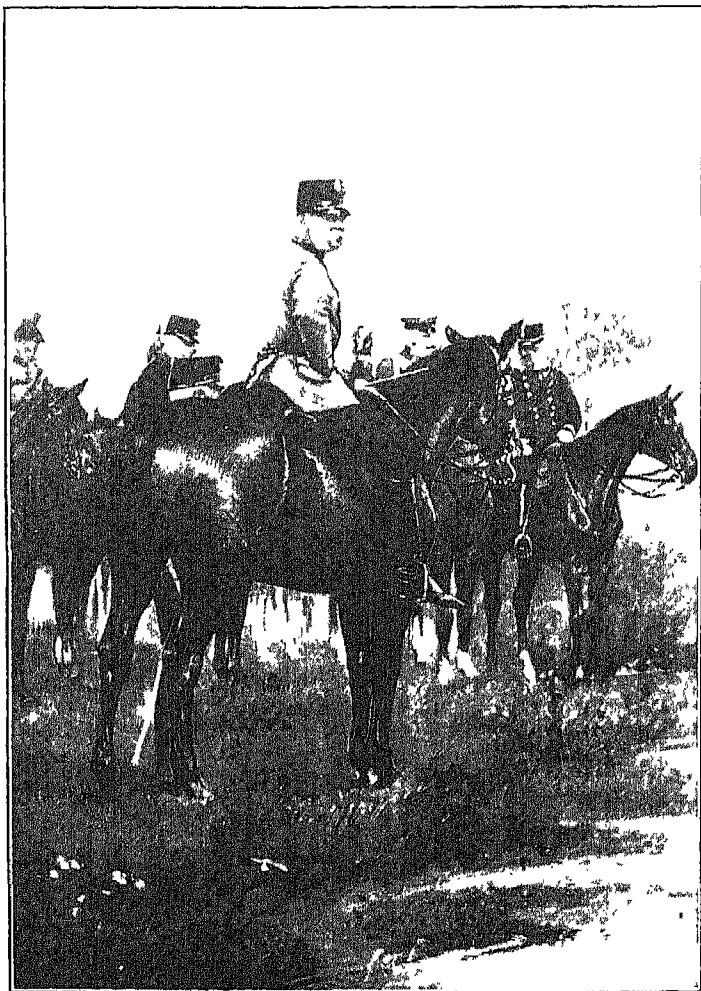
“Not a drop ! We don’t have champagne at manoeuvres. ‘He’ can have as much beer or wine as he likes. Let him drink beer ! ”

I myself was pleased that His Majesty took this stand, for it was at least a slight revenge for the “Stettin Broth” and the over-cooked royal Prussian beef.

From Bistritz, on the 15th September, His Majesty issued the famous *communiqué* in which he thanked the troops, and noted with satisfaction that the army was equal to any demands which might, in times of peril, be put upon it.

That time the royal headquarters were in the famous historic castle of the Baron von Laudon, a





THE EMPEROR AT THE MILITARY MANOEUVRES IN 1907

descendant of the famous imperial Field-Marshal of Maria Theresa's reign. In the apartments were many reminders of the Seven Years' War, portraits of the great leader, as well as a very large collection of hunting trophies and splendid antlers, which were good proof of the richness of that game country.

In 1899 the Emperor attended the autumn manœuvres near Reichstadt. From Bohemia His Majesty went to Klagenfurt, where he reviewed the newly formed Imperial Chasseurs Alpins who marched out for the first time, each man carrying an alpen-stock, and each with a dog at his side.

The German Crown Prince was also invited to the manœuvres at Sasyar in 1902; he was much more modest than his father, and our Emperor liked him very well indeed. Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm played the violin beautifully, and often His Majesty was enchanted by his playing.

Archduke Rainer was also there—a simple gentleman, good and kind of heart. Almost all his luggage would have gone into a handkerchief knotted at the corners; he had only one uniform coat with him, and if it got wet, this great man merely waited until it had been dried before the fire.

The Emperor was highly delighted and very well satisfied when our determined Bosnians lured a patrol of Dragoons into ambush and took them prisoners.

At the manœuvres in the neighbourhood of Przemyśl in 1903 we were quartered in wooden cantonments built on the lines of Hungarian farms, that is, on ground level. The field-kitchen had, as usual, been sent on in advance. Meals were served

in the big tent, and often there were more than forty gentlemen present as the Emperor's guests.

It was terribly cold, so the Emperor ordered that wine and bread were to be given to the sentries on duty before his quarters. Now, a soldier on sentry duty is not allowed to take anything at all; the men kept their faces absolutely blank when I—certainly acting on His Majesty's orders but against all Army regulations—put the wine out. I did not say anything but simply motioned to it, implying "there's something for you."

His Majesty also said, "Give them a few cigarettes as well."

The sentries paraded past the forbidden fruit for a while, then by degrees began to take bread, bottles and cigarettes. The very next night, however, the guard was withdrawn, for the Emperor declared that he did not require a second protection, as his surroundings were in themselves sufficient.

Once the conversation turned to the treachery of Colonel Redl, who had betrayed to the Russians the very fort where the Emperor was staying.

This Colonel Redl came from a modest household in Galicia, his father being a minor official on the railway. He was the most wide-awake and talented of his numerous brothers and sisters, went to the Cadet School, and finally landed in the General Staff. On account of his craftiness and detailed knowledge of Galicia he was appointed Chief of the Espionage Department for Galicia and Russia. At once he started to play a double game. He knew just the places where the Russian nobles and officials were "mortal"; to one he sent beautiful women, others

he tempted with gold, whilst to some he gave estates. Thanks to his smartness and to that of his subordinates, he did some service to Austria, when he bribed the Chief of General Staff in Warsaw and then informed the Russian authorities. That Russian Chief of General Staff was hanged four weeks after the discovery of his treachery, so that Redl was freed from the main witness of his shameful crime.

Every year numerous officers of the Espionage Department of the General Staff were sent into the most varied countries, where they did their work disguised in quite romantic fashion. Thus one officer was once sent to Italy to obtain information regarding the depth of the waters of Venice ; he travelled as an agent of Baedeker's. Another Redl sent to Warsaw as a billiard-ball merchant, to draw out the Russian Chief of Staff. This officer, a crony and accomplice of Redl, was not only to spy for Austria—for which we of course paid the Russian Chief of Staff—but was also to deliver to the Russian authorities on Redl's account Austrian secret documents, for which Redl was again very well paid.

Then Redl came to Prague as Chief of General Staff to Baron Giesl, Commander of an Army Corps. From there Redl went every week to Vienna, a fact which certainly appeared curious to his superiors, but did not at first arouse their suspicions ; in Vienna he appeared each week in the office formerly his, and entirely without authority examined the private documents which a blindly trusting colonel put at his disposal. From these documents Redl obtained further information which he sold to Russia. The Heir-Apparent, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, had for



a long time been suspicious of Redl's luxurious mode of life, but had always been quietened by the fairy-tale that Redl had inherited a fortune. It did not occur to anybody to go rather more closely into the matter of this inheritance. When Redl's treachery did at last come to light, he was not put behind bars and bolts so that through sharp cross-questioning we might find out exactly which secret plans referring to Galicia he had sold to Russia. Instead, the traitor had a revolver pressed into his hand with the remark that if he did not shoot himself at once he would be hanged within a month. Certainly some circles were in too much of a hurry that time.

By order of the Ministry of War the fort that had been betrayed by Redl was to be shot to pieces. In order to test the effect of the shots, a couple of brave officers let themselves be fastened in the fort in the Emperor's presence, but the fort was so firmly built that those confined therein did not even hear the detonations of the exploding grenades. It was then agreed that the fort should be blown up, and the Emperor was a witness of this sad proceeding.

In this connection I will speak also of another man who severely compromised all officers of the Austrian army; I refer to Lieutenant Adolf Hofrichter of the General Staff. I remember how the Emperor, when he heard of the deeds of this man, was greatly moved, pacing up and down the room for an hour, or standing at times at the window with his forehead pressed against the cold glass. He could not believe that in his Army, among his officers, greed should have brought about a crime deserving of such condemnation,

One can still remember that in the middle of November 1909 Staff-Captain Richard Mader died in most suspicious circumstances. The day before he had received from a certain Charles Francis pills to strengthen his nerves, and these he used ; when his batman came in the morning to the Captain's room he found his master lying there senseless. The people called in quickly to help could do naught but verify the unfortunate man's death.

The inquest resulted only in the finding that the cause of death was the pills, the wrappings of which clearly showed that cyanide of potash had been present. At the same time similar pills had been made to nine others of the General Staff, exactly as to Captain Mader, the happening caused enormous excitement, and the then Head of the Department of Public Safety, Councillor Moritz Stukart, was entrusted with the clearing up of the affair, two officers of the General Staff being detailed to help him.

At first it was thought to be a case of an enemy's attack on the Austria-Hungarian Army, and that the criminals were aiming at the General Staff alone. As, however, the pills had not been sent to the most prominent members of the Staff, this idea was dropped and it began to look—as it later turned out rightly—that the assassin must be sought among the persons who, in the case of success attending the despatch of the poison, were likeliest to profit by it.

Thus it turned out that a Lieutenant Hofrichter, on garrison duty in Linz, was seriously suspected of having made this mad plan to get ahead in his career more quickly by removing his superiors.

Hofrichter was arrested at once and kept im-

prisoned in the garrison. During many months he lied stubbornly, which is not to be wondered at, as death certainly awaited him for his crime; yet according to the military criminal code then in force if the criminal was not caught in the act, sentence of death could only be passed if the prisoner confessed.

Collateral with the official enquiry was one conducted by two Viennese journalists, Max Winter and Hans Bösbauer. During the proceedings Hofrichter's brother-in-law died suddenly; this most respectable citizen had been terribly anxious to remove the cloud of suspicion from Hofrichter, and at the time it was said that he died of a broken heart at the moment when it was forced upon him that his brother-in-law had really been guilty of taking life. Hofrichter was adjudged guilty, and, as he had not confessed, was sentenced to imprisonment for life. When the crash came he, as was the case with all military prisoners, was released from jail; he was rearrested, but eventually set free. He lives in Vienna. It is said that it was only for love of his wife that he committed the dreadful crime, but it is terrible to think that even greed and love should not shrink from wholesale murder.

At the manœuvres of 1905 the Emperor once noticed among the mass of spectators, an old Jew, decorated with the Gold Medal for Valour. His Majesty stopped the carriage, chatted with the man and congratulated him.

During these manœuvres a civilian offered the Emperor an umbrella, for it was pouring with rain. The Emperor smilingly refused :

“Thanks, no ! Why should I alone keep dry while all my men are getting wet through ? ”

At the manœuvres at Veszprim in 1908 the imperial headquarters were on the grounds of an ecclesiastical order. Each member of this religious community had his own little house, and was looked after by a so-called “housekeeper.” The reverend gentlemen lived very well, and led a free, altogether independent life. They were all high dignitaries of the Church. Bishop Hornik, with whom His Majesty stayed, was very solicitous for the Emperor’s well-being ; His Majesty felt very comfortable at the Bishop’s, and I myself certainly had no cause for complaint.

When, for the manœuvres at Gross-Meseritsch, His Majesty was staying at the castle of Count Harrach, he looked out of the window while shaving and saw the imperial coachman, Walter, walking up and down looking very disgruntled.

“Why is Walter pulling such a long face ? ” asked His Majesty.

“Because nowadays he never drives Your Majesty at the manœuvres,” I replied ; “Your Majesty always uses the motor now.”

Rather wistfully the Emperor said :

“Well, I would much rather drive with Walter myself, but it is impossible now. With the present method of warfare the distances to be covered are too big ; one has to get over great stretches of ground as quickly as ever possible, which cannot be done in a carriage.”

At these manœuvres Kaiser Wilhelm was again present. Archduke Franz Salvator, not a great favourite of His Majesty, had to flee, as all the

cavalry under his command were taken prisoners. There was nothing but confusion. The horses of the cavalrymen, as well as those of the baggage train got frightened and rushed in different directions; the Archduke fled to the castle, and asked the Emperor for shelter for the night. His Majesty was raging, and would not receive the Archduke. Then, when the Head Steward, Prilezsky, came to me and asked for a night-shirt for the Archduke, I refused, for on principle I never lent anything belonging to my noble master.

“But just look here,” said Prilezsky, “remember, he’s a poor refugee!”

I, however, would not allow myself to be moved to pity, so Prilezsky then approached the Emperor himself through Count Paar.

“All right, give him a night-shirt,” ordered His Majesty. “After all, he has nothing with him—but he certainly did not earn it!”

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE EMPEROR, ART AND ARTISTS

**M**ALICIOUS tongues have stated that Wilhelm II, before receiving illustrious guests, always practised character physiognomy studies before the looking-glass and tried out his deportment and gestures in the throne-room, in the surroundings in which the actual reception would later take place. Laughable as this may appear at the first moment, one must not forget that the impression made upon a stranger by a ruler has a distinct bearing upon the opinion the foreigner forms of the nation represented by the sovereign. With Wilhelm II there was, of course, also a certain personal vanity in the game, but Francis Joseph also liked to sit for his portrait. Whilst, however, the pictures of Wilhelm II showed one the ruler of the greatest and most proficient military nation of the age, in those of Francis Joseph the fatherly, simple and home-loving ideas comes more to the fore.

While still a youth the Emperor showed a great love of painting, and had a sharp eye for form and placing. His youthful artistic achievements are little known, but I have in my possession a drawing which His Majesty once gave to me ; it represents a soldier. Through his early accession to the throne the Emperor was prevented from further education in this branch,

for the duties of State left him no time for artistic accomplishment. Many of the Habsburgs had a talent for drawing.

The Emperor repeatedly had his fairy-like, beautiful consort Elisabeth painted ; and Frau v. Schratt also. Of His Majesty there exists a great number of pictures ; his youthful portraits are little known, one almost always sees him represented as the " old " Emperor with his white beard, clear blue eyes and kindly face, on whose features shone the gleam of placid, noble peace and gentle understanding.

First we see the Emperor portrayed clad in simple hunting costume, then in full-dress, or in the varied uniforms of his own and foreign regiments. For my noble master it was no small matter to let himself be painted first in this, then in that position, and it needed a truly angelic patience to examine and go through all these portraits destined in part for presents, in part for politic, patriotic or propaganda purposes. Yet the pleasant relations between the Emperor and the artists changed the tiring part of the performance for His Majesty into one of the pleasant and pleasing duties of his calling.

" Trembling and afraid," the artists would start the work, but they found a patient and likeable model, and Francis Joseph knew how to make them feel at ease by pleasant conversation to pass the time, so that long before the portrait was finished they had lost all shyness.

" Yes," His Majesty remarked to me on one occasion, " I rarely have an easy time with these gentlemen the artists, for I always have to help them to get rid of their stage-fright first ! "

The artists were not expected to appear for work in frock-coat and white tie; each might come as he liked, and the sittings were very far from uncomfortable.

The "Province of Art" really belonged to the Chief Chamberlain in office. It was for him to advise the Emperor in matters artistic, to suggest suitable people when His Majesty wished to have a portrait painted, to intervene in the purchase of pictures, and thus to push new painters. In the main, however, Francis Joseph did as he himself thought, and was influenced by his own personal taste. Sometimes even I could help a painter, for I could mention to His Majesty :

"That man knows what he is about—Your Majesty should commission a portrait from him."

If not as great a connoisseur of art as the Wittelsbach Prince Regent, Leopold of Bavaria, nevertheless Francis Joseph visited *salons* and attended the exhibitions in the Artists' Hall, where he criticised the exhibits sharply. He particularly disliked the modern style of painting; a hyper-modern painter had to see the Emperor pass by with a mocking smile, or even with a derisive remark about "that daub"!

The Emperor is said to have supported the artists very generously in the 'seventies of the nineteenth century particularly, when times for the rising art were growing steadily worse. The royal aid took the form, among other things, of buying pictures for his private collections, and granting needy painters sums of money from the Privy Purse.

Among the Emperor's portraits there stands out the oil-painting of Jovanovic, owing to the high degree of artistic finish and the great likeness. As



the Emperor had little time to spare for the sittings, the artist did his work in only two hours. The picture was intended for the steamer *Francis Joseph I* of the Danube Steam Shipping Company, launched on the occasion of the opening of the Danube Channel at Orsova. The steamer had a wonderful dining-saloon, which by movable partitions could be divided into two further rooms—bedroom and study for His Majesty. This picture is one of the best existing of the Emperor; he is shown in active-service uniform with blue coat, and the likeness is so excellent that one quite expects to see His Majesty step from the frame.

I was always sent to the artists by the Emperor to see how the work was progressing, and to make sure that details of the uniform and decorations were correctly portrayed. On one such occasion I visited Pochwalski's studio, as this artist had been commissioned to paint a picture of the Emperor in hunting costume for the Hunting Exhibition in Vienna in 1910—a work later purchased by Prince Fürstenberg. When I entered the studio there before the easel lay a sorry specimen of a stag, and I asked Pochwalski in astonishment where he had managed to get such a dreadful object. Laughingly he explained that he had borrowed the stag from a local game-dealer against a promise to paint the owner's portrait afterward. When I told His Majesty of this he ordered that a good stag with twelve-pronged antlers was to be shot and sent to the artist at once.

The famous artist Horowitz painted the Emperor in the uniform of the English King's Dragoons. He began the picture in Gödöllő, went on with the work

in his studio in Vienna, and finished it in Ischl, where His Majesty gave over to him the so-called "Cottage," in which he set up his studio. This cottage was a pavilion with red marble pillars, which in bad weather served as a playground for Archduchess Maria Valerie's children, and here the Emperor granted the artist the last essential sittings. Then when one day I went over again in accordance with the Emperor's instructions to see how the picture was progressing, and was setting up the dummy that served as a guide for the details of the uniform, Horowitz told me that he intended to show the Emperor's portrait to the public, charging admission. I knew that His Majesty did not like that kind of thing, and reported the matter to him the next morning.

"Did he say that to you as well?" His Majesty flared up. "But I forbade it! When the picture is finished you are to lock up the pavilion and take the key yourself, so that Horowitz cannot get in again!"

As late as 1916 another artist, David Kohn, painted the Emperor for war-work purposes. Kohn was a great favourite of His Majesty, who repeatedly said to me:

"Kohn is not only a great artist, but also in the best sense of the word a real good fellow!"

When the sittings were over, Kohn made a crayon sketch as well, and presented it to the Emperor. I can well remember how His Majesty turned the sketch about between his fingers, not quite knowing what to do with it; suddenly a happy thought struck him; he passed the paper over to me, saying:

"Ketterl, I'll give this to you—I can't very well hang myself up in my own room."

And so this portrait of the Emperor still looks down at me from the wall of my room.

Neither must I forget to mention Temple's beautiful portrait. Temple chose for his painting the moment when the Emperor received from the Archduke Friedrich the Military Cross presented to him at the great Court gathering in Schönbrunn, held to celebrate His Majesty's sixty years' reign.

Portraits of the Emperor Francis Joseph were much sought after abroad; everybody wanted to see how the old Emperor of Austria would look in the uniform of the foreign country in question, and consequently His Majesty had repeatedly to let himself be painted in the uniform of regiments in which he held honorary rank. Vita specialised in painting portraits of foreign uniforms, and knew all the necessary details, down to the very smallest. When later the artist was seriously ill and went practically blind after an operation, His Majesty granted him an annuity from the Privy Purse.

Painters, however, suffered a great deal from intrigues at the Court. Once Tom Dreger painted the Emperor in the uniform of an English Field-Marshal. During four months His Majesty gave the artist sittings for this beautiful picture, on which the painter expended all his art and all his ability, but when the portrait was practically finished—it suddenly disappeared completely. Naturally I tried to discover its fate, but although I hunted for it in all the corners of Schönbrunn Castle the matter remained, then, as now, an unsolved mystery. The artist himself was also greatly puzzled as to who had carried it off, and as to why just his work should have been "confis-

cated." Yet the painter had his revenge ; when he was at Schönbrunn the last time to collect his brushes and easel, he seized the opportunity to photograph the Emperor and Frau v. Schratt from behind the drawn curtains, just as the couple were going together into the private garden. I saw this and rushed upon the evil-doer, crying :

" Now then, what are you doing there ? "

" Dear Mr. Ketterl," replied Tom Dreger, " I beg you, do not make such a fuss. As hush-money you shall have a copy of the photograph."

That bribe proved effective enough to stop my reporting the " attempted outrage."

One of the last artists permitted to paint the Emperor before his death was Professor Erwin Poschinger. One Sunday morning the Professor came to the private chapel at Schönbrunn Castle to make further sketches for a large portrait of the Emperor intended for the Royal General Military Council in Lublin. The Emperor appeared in the body of the Chapel, but already a shadow of ill-health was visible, strengthened by the pallor due to the inside atmosphere ; at the time when His Majesty should have given the artist a final sitting and have viewed the portrait he was taken ill, although we at first thought the attack but slight and harmless. So the Professor was put off for the time being—but the delayed sitting was never given, for the Emperor died before the artist had put the finishing touches to his work.

Francis Joseph, who felt deeply in questions of art, did not like to see canvases that looked like snapshots, as for instance, the strained postures of gallop-

ing horses; he objected to any thing forced, always wishing a character of peace and quietness to be preserved.

The Emperor also had a good knowledge of sculpture. Cassin, who among other things modelled a bust of the Emperor for the House Collection, was commissioned to execute the Undine Fountain for the Kurpark in Baden, with the design of which he took the first prize. Cassin had made a much smaller model—which he sold to a Greek—as a table-piece, and wished to exhibit this model in the Artists' Hall. The committee promised him the use of a small room, with water laid on, so that the fountain might be seen playing, and Cassin was consequently very pleased at having the chance of showing the model to the Emperor on the occasion of the opening of the Artists' Hall. Yet alas! "Man proposes and—the Committee disposes." For when the sculptor arrived at the Hall bringing the fountain to be installed, he was told that he could only have quite a small room *without running water*. At this Cassin, with a very woebegone expression, drove away again with the model. Naturally the matter was much discussed, and I too heard of it; I was sorry for the sculptor, and as he also came and poured out his heart to me, I decided to help him if I possibly could. I related the whole affair to His Majesty, and as it apparently amused the Emperor to snap his fingers at the big pots of the Artists' Hall he called the Governor of the castle to him, and ordered that a suitable room be found in the castle where Cassin's work could be set up and properly appreciated. Cassin naturally was informed at once of the Emperor's kindness, and it

was a great day for the sculptor when he could show his work to all the greatest personages in the land. Everything was at its best; the fountain shimmered amongst the gorgeous floral decorations sent from the imperial greenhouses, and the water gushed forth in ample jets. The Emperor heaped the overjoyed sculptor with praise, and Cassin was all happiness and delight.

Another young sculptor, who unfortunately died at a very early age, was Gastav Hermann, who once commemorated in sculpture a charming scene which took place at the Industrial Exhibition in Reichenberg in 1906, calling the group "The Emperor and the Child."

In Maffersdorf the little daughter of that great captain of industry v. Liebig presented the Emperor with a bouquet of flowers. The movement which Francis Joseph made in order to take the scented gift from the little maiden's hand so enchanted the sculptor that he decided to make an enduring memento of the pretty scene. The group was to be erected in Maffersdorf as a monument; the model the sculptor presented to His Majesty, who was much pleased by it.

At this point I would like to mention another episode, in which I personally played a part. The famous sculptor Rothberger very much wanted to show the Emperor a statuette that he had made. The Chamberlains, painful sticklers on such points, were most decidedly against allowing Rothberger to present the little masterpiece personally, and would only permit him to hand the statuette over to the officials in the ante-chamber. For the Chamberlains were

mightily anxious to prevent one of his subjects appearing before the Emperor except in cases of grave necessity. At such times it always pleased me enormously to thwart at the Chamberlains. Consequently when Rothberger entered the ante-chamber with his statuette I asked him :

“ Would you not like to go in to His Majesty ? ”

Rotherberger was torn between timidity and pleasurable excitement.

“ But, Mr. von Ketterl,” he said, “ I’m only in morning-dress ! ”

I saw that this was merely a phrase due to his embarrassment, so remarking :

“ It would please you then,” I immediately entered the Emperor’s room and asked whether His Majesty would receive the sculptor waiting outside. The Emperor nodded, and I drew the artist, still resisting with almost maidenly timidity, into the imperial study and shut the door. A few moments later Rothberger, quite pale with joy and excitement, found me again and thanked me in the most heartfelt manner. This little story, like all those where I acted on my own initiative, had its sequel. Prince Montenuovo was furiously angry, and raged that once more somebody had been admitted to the Emperor’s presence without due application and announcement.

Another little story. One of the funniest figures on the stage of the Budapest Orpheum in Vienna, a little Jewish burlesque theatre, was Heinrich Eisenbach. His expression alone was extraordinarily funny, and with it all he was a really great artist, whose dream it had been to get to the Hofburg-

theater, for he had in him the makings of a truly great actor. Yet in spite of that he remained all his life only the fun-maker and the buffoon. Then, when Eisenbach was once playing at the Sommertheater in Ischl and His Majesty was also staying in that place, Frau v. Schratt recommended His Majesty to go and see Eisenbach ; the Emperor, accompanied by the Archduchess Maria Valerie followed this suggestion, laughed at the play until he cried, and at the end commanded the comedian to be brought to the royal box. Eisenbach with his grave yet still humorous face, timidly entered the box, and the only favour he asked was the permission to photograph His Majesty. He was then allowed to take the photograph the next day in the garden of the royal villa ; the actor, who did not ordinarily lose his sang-froid easily, was not quite equal to that situation ; at the critical moment he was so shaken with stage-fright that the camera shivered and trembled in sympathy, with the result that Eisenbach got His Majesty on the plate about twenty times, with a fan-like effect.

Highly as Francis Joseph appreciated the painter's art, to music he brought little understanding. In the Emperor's private apartments there was not even a piano. The Empress, on the other hand, was very much enamoured of music, caring especially for fiery and passionate melodies. In Gödöllő she always commanded that the gipsies—those masters of the violin—who had pitched their tents in the neighbourhood of the castle should appear before her.

The Emperor had greater leanings to the theatre, but whilst one rarely saw him at the Opera save for



*théâtre paré*, he often visited the Burgtheater, especially if Frau v. Schratt was herself playing, or pieces were being given which she had recommended. Francis Joseph would very much have liked to see *The Weavers*, but all kinds of obstacles were encountered in the persons of Prince Montenuovo and Archduchess Valerie. The Archduchess, who considered the Burgtheater rather in the light of a private theatre of her own, and other important personages, kept up a systematic baiting until the Emperor gave in for the sake of peace. *Liebelei*, by Arthur Schnitzler, and Gerhart Hauptmann's *Rose Bernd* were to be withdrawn at the Archduchess's wish, the latter because there appears in it a pregnant woman ! This endeavour certainly failed in part, but the Archduchess succeeded in persuading the Emperor not to attend the immoral piece himself !

During Francis Joseph's reign the fame and glory of the Viennese theatre reached high-water mark, and thousands of memories link the thought of Francis Joseph with the Vienna stage. In the last years of his life the Emperor unfortunately withdrew more and more from the theatre, which fact was not without its bad influence on the growth of that form of art in the capital. Yet he retained his interest and his goodwill towards his own Burgtheater, and many an actor owed thanks to Frau v. Schratt that when he was in debt the Emperor "set him up" again.

## CHAPTER XV

### PORTRAITS OF FOREIGN RULERS

FOR decades the regular companion of my sovereign, I had naturally ample opportunity of getting to know from quite near at hand most of the crowned and uncrowned rulers of the world, and often there resulted a picture that did not in the least agree with the school-books, after-dinner speeches and newspaper reports, for the way from the eye to the paper is endlessly long—and complicated.

Francis Joseph was a solitary figure, even in his relations with other rulers of the world.

Least of all he liked King Leopold of Belgium; above all the commercial, peddler-like traits of this king were repugnant to His Majesty, who deemed them incompatible with the dignity of a sovereign.

Neither did he like the prudent and immensely rich Czar Ferdinand of Bulgaria. I believe His Majesty could not get over the fact that this sometime little "Lieutenant of the Royal Hussars" had advanced so far as to become the ruler of Bulgaria, and become, as reigning monarch, the equal of the Emperor, his one-time supreme military chief. In addition to that, Czar Ferdinand was successful in everything that he took up, in private as well as in public life, and that was a thing that Francis Joseph could certainly not say

about himself ! As a firm Catholic the Emperor also held it against the Bulgarian monarch that he, as a Catholic and as the husband of a Catholic princess, had for reasons of State permitted his children to be brought up in the Russian Church, although at his marriage he had solemnly promised to have his children baptised as Roman Catholics. King Ferdinand was excommunicated on this account, and it is therefore easily explained why the Emperor had as little as possible to do with this breaker of oaths and excommunicated sovereign.

On the other hand, the Emperor esteemed King Oscar of Sweden highly, and returned that monarch's visit to Abbazia. As Oscar, however, was a learned man withdrawn from the world, the two had little in common.

Between the Austrian royal couple, and the elderly widow of Napoleon III there were very friendly relations.

Here I must add a small reminiscence of the year 1859, for which I have to thank my predecessor in office, Hornung. This occurrence shows clearly how trustful the Emperor was, and how crafty Napoleon, who well knew how to get round Francis Joseph. It was after the battle of Solferino ; in France revolution threatened, in Prussia mobilisation. In order to make a good impression on the Emperor, Napoleon wrote to the royal headquarters in Verona saying that the body of Prince Windischgratz, the Emperor's *aide-de-camp*, had been found and handed over with military honours to the Austrian advance troops. In addition he asked for an interview, to make peace—"enough blood had flowed, and he had





KING EDWARD VII IN HIS UNIFORM AS COFONTE OF AUSTRIAN  
AFTER RUSSARS

learned the valour of the imperial troops." Although Archduke Maximilian, the Emperor's brother—a man with good brains and a sharp political understanding—entreated His Majesty not to accede to Napoleon's request, the Emperor, nevertheless, agreed to the French Emperor's wish and the meeting was arranged. The Emperor was escorted by a squadron of Hussars ; in front of the tent where the meeting was to take place stood Napoleon, his plumed hat in his hand, to let His Majesty take precedence, for, said the wily Frenchman : " I would never think of preceding a Habsburg." With that Francis Joseph's heart was won !

In the course of the interview Napoleon assured the Emperor that it would never have occurred to him to march against Austria had not the Freemasons and the Carbonari forced his hand. The bomb hurled at him had been a warning—" You must keep faith ! War ! "

And so Francis Joseph let himself be fooled ; he made peace, and that peace was the beginning of Austria's downfall. There was a dreadful scene afterward between the Emperor and Archduke Maximilian, at the close of which His Majesty ordered the Archduke to leave at once.

Francis Joseph, however, retained a kindly feeling for Napoleon III, and also for the widowed Empress Eugénie. These two met frequently in Cap Martin and in Salzkammergut.

The Emperor also honoured old Queen Victoria of England. He would dearly have liked to pay her and the future King Edward a visit in England ; in that case, however, he could not have avoided

Belgium, and the Emperor, as stated previously, despised King "Cleopold," so the trip was never undertaken, although His Majesty visited the Queen in 1896 at the Hotel du Cimicz at Nice. On that occasion I made the acquaintance of my famous colleague, Mr. John Brown, who filled the same confidential position with the Queen that I did with my illustrious master. This Mr. Brown was a character. The Queen allowed him great freedom, and he took liberties which I should never have felt that I could permit myself. For one thing he always had a flask of whisky with him when he went out with the Queen, and in wet, cold weather he wondered grumpily—"whether they wouldn't be going home soon?" for Mr. Brown suffered from rheumatism.

In 1896 the Emperor once went across quite unexpectedly, without his suite, from Cap Martin to Mentone, to visit as a private person and as the guest of the French Republic the President, Félix Faure, who happened to be staying there. On the return journey His Majesty was recognised by natives and by visitors, and was given an enthusiastic greeting; his carriage was one huge mass of flowers, so that he sat as if buried in an immense flower-bed. The Emperor, who had but too little opportunity of coming into contact with people outside the Court and official circles, was pleased as a child when he could be free and could talk with whom he pleased. On this day he came back really cheered by the freedom he had enjoyed, and much moved and pleased by all the tokens of love and affection that had been showered upon him.

Félix Faure, who although only the son of a tanner,

was known to be very fond of courtly pomp and ceremony, and liked to play the king, came three-quarters of an hour later in great state, with half a squadron of Cuirassiers as escort, to pay the Emperor a return visit.

High in the Emperor Francis Joseph's favour stood the youthfully fresh and gallant King Alfonso of Spain, and His Majesty was also particularly fond of talking with his consort Victoria. The grandchild of Prince Alexander of Hessen by his morganatic wife, she was, according to the German House Statutes and those of the House of Habsburg, certainly not of equal birth, but when a crown adorns the beautiful blonde head even of an "unequal," and the wearer knows how to talk charmingly, even the strictest statutes are frequently relaxed.

The Emperor also thought well of King Milan; he kept his Serbs well in hand, and was very open-handed, although the financial position of his country was most unstable. Queen Natalie, Milan's consort, born a Keschko, was considered the most beautiful woman of her time. In 1875 the marriage took place, in 1888 the couple separated, and in 1893 husband and wife came together again. In 1889 King Milan abdicated in favour of his son Alexander, who was assassinated in such terrible manner in 1903. King Milan was a perfect cavalier and man of the world, who was only too willing to celebrate every holiday that was marked in the calendar, and who always lived merrily and on a grand scale. His unfortunate son Alexander on the contrary was extraordinarily shy and gauche.

Serbia's next-door neighbour, King "Niki" of



Montenegro, our Emperor also liked, although he only came to Vienna when he needed money. He was always short of funds, and our Emperor gave him all the financial aid he possibly could. The two sovereigns met in the Emperor's private study, and the interview lasted just as long as it took for Niki to get what he wanted. The patriarchal manners of this Prince of the Black Hills and his quips always amused His Majesty greatly; at Court the Montenegrin always appeared in the uniform of Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Infantry Regiment, in which his generous girth made him look quite grotesque. The Emperor never paid him a return visit, but the Heir-Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, once visited him at his capital, Cetinje, on the occasion of manœuvres held in the district.

King Peter of Serbia, Alexander's successor, was considered quite impossible by most rulers, including Francis Joseph. A Bavarian nobleman and officer once told me the following interesting tale about Peter :

"It was in 1899. I was then staying at my hunting-box in Upper Bavaria, when a Dr. Hedler from Frankfort-on-Main was announced. He was a little, very carefully groomed man, elderly, clothed with carefully studied simplicity, with sharp-cut features, white military moustache, and unusually winning and pleasant manners. The real reason of his visit appeared to me somewhat vague. He talked a great deal of the Karageorgievic family, who were leading a very modest private life in Geneva, and especially of Peter, to whom the throne of Serbia should belong; he wanted from me recommendations to people of high

position in England. During the conversation he also sounded me as to whether I would perhaps like, if there should be a change in the succession in Serbia, to enter Serbian service as military instructor. I declined, as my stags and chamois were dearer to me than the whole Karageorgievic family and Serbia put together. Scarcely had Dr. Hedler departed than I received an official invitation, and was asked whether I could give any more detailed information regarding the said Dr. Hedler. He was apparently not the person he pretended to be, had engaged various people as secretaries, etc., paying salaries in advance, and seemed generally a suspicious character. I could not give any information. Then when Alexander was assassinated and the picture of the new King Peter appeared in the papers, I at once recognised my worthy Dr. Hedler! He had been travelling round, sounding people's feelings, making acquaintances, obtaining letters of recommendation and winning officers over to his cause."

Only in King Albert of Saxony had our Emperor a real friend. Both were Catholics, of about the same age, and both worshipped in equal knightly and huntsmanly fashion the noble art of venery. Often the King of Saxony stayed with Francis Joseph for the hunting.

On the other hand, Albert's grandson, later King Friedrich-August, did not appeal to any of us. Not only did he always appear unwashed and unkempt, but he was too fond of drink, especially wine. One really can scarcely blame his former wife, Luise, if she ran away from him; she herself, as a Toskana, certainly did not come from an altogether saintly

milieu, and had been brought up rather freely, yet her husband's conduct when he was the Crown Prince, added to the old-fashioned, rather bourgeois yet formal ceremonial of the Court at Dresden, must have alienated her. The telegram announcing that Crown Princess Luise of Saxony had fled to parts unknown with Monsieur Giron was given to the Emperor at the station at Penzing, as he was on the point of entering the royal train for Wallsee. He was greatly distressed and perplexed. He, who ordinarily never allowed his subordinates to see when he was out of humour, never spoke a single word to me for some days during the morning toilet—a sign of how much suffering the happening caused him.

With King Edward of England the Emperor was on most cordial and familiar terms, addressing him as "Du." King Edward, in spite of the small power granted the English monarchs, well knew how to get the threads of all home and foreign politics into his hands, held with firm grasp the steering-wheel of the State, and ruled as the real king. The growing power and development of Germany under Wilhelm II worried him, and Edward therefore tried by every means in his power to isolate Germany and limit her expansion, so that later in conjunction with all the other world-powers he might fall upon his German competitors with shattering weight of numbers, and bring them to total ruin. For this purpose he wished to separate the Austro-German union. When he stayed at Ischl in 1904 and 1905 he was always drilling it into our Emperor that he should withdraw from such close relations with Germany. The royal coachman on the box told me that during a pleasure trip

to Weisenbach His Majesty had fairly bristled with indignation at such a suggestion.

"I am a German prince," Francis Joseph had said with emotion, "and I keep my word." Yet Edward did not give the matter up; when the Emperor paid him a return visit in Marienbad he got back to the same theme, so that Francis Joseph, angered and grieved, left again the very next day.

King Edward had incredible sang-froid; he feared neither God nor the devil, and least of all attempts on his life. From 1903 to 1909 he went every year for the cure to Marienbad, where the later Chief of Police, Schober, was entrusted with his safety, but Edward wanted to go about absolutely unhindered by police protection. He was so popular and mixed so freely with the populace that it was practically a work of art to shelter him from the too exuberant demonstrations of the crowds' pleasure. When on his accession to the throne Francis Joseph conferred upon King Edward the rank of Austrian Field-Marshal—sending him the uniform along with the appointment—Edward appeared highly pleased and told the Austrian Ambassador in London, Count Mensdorff, who in turn was to inform the Emperor, how happy he was to have been accorded this great honour, saying that it was now his dearest wish to have in addition the uniform of a Hungarian Field-Marshal. That, of course, was simply "put on," for to King Edward—who always wore civilian dress and only when absolutely necessary appeared in uniform when in Ischl or Marienbad—Field-Marshal's rank and uniform were matters of complete indifference. He

did not care about them in the slightest, but, anyway, Francis Joseph felt flattered.

Just as Edward wanted to separate Austria from Germany, so he always incited France against Germany. Even independent Serbia was to him a thorn in the flesh, and as he did not acknowledge King Peter for years no British Ambassador was appointed to Belgrade. Serbia, Roumania and Hungary he would have liked to see bound by a treaty similar to that existing between the kingdoms of Bavaria and Prussia, then to have united the Balkan States with Austria-Hungary, incorporating with the Austrian Empire all South Germany between the Main and the Alps, that is, Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg and Hessen. Thus the idea of a "Danube Kingdom," ventilated here and there in our own day owing to the trying times experienced since 1919 with the "acquired" territories, had already been taken into consideration by King Edward—good proof of his far-sightedness.

On one of his stays in Ischl King Edward took a small liberty which our Emperor inwardly always held against him. The Emperor had visited Edward at the Hotel Elisabeth, and the imperial carriage drawn by Lippizaner horses was waiting in front of the hotel to take the two great rulers for a drive. Quite secretly Edward dismissed the royal coachman, Walter, doing this in such a way that the man was bound to think that the order came from the Emperor himself. Then when His Majesty came down with King Edward there was only Edward's motor standing before the door, in which with a friendly chuckle he invited Francis Joseph to take a seat. This joke made

the Emperor most uncomfortable, for he had never before been in a motor, and had a certain suspicious antipathy to these modern conveyances. Yet what was he to do? Before the dense crowd of visitors surrounding the vehicle, he must needs put the best possible face on a bad job, so, outwardly smiling, but inwardly raging over this surprise, he got into his jovial colleague's automobile.

On his return—we were all prepared for a really big storm—the Emperor merely said to me :

“The motor drive was quite nice, but I like my Lippizaner team better !”

## CHAPTER XVI

### KAISER WILHELM II

**A** POWERFUL man stands or falls by his success and an example of this is Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany.

Wilhelm II was liked neither by Francis Joseph nor by our Austrian people. This state of feeling dates from 1899, when the Kaiser was invited to the imperial manœuvres, but behaved as an army inspector rather than as a guest. In particular he sharply criticised the Austrian Infantry, which was then under Crown Prince Rudolf, Inspector of Infantry. Our Emperor was raging over Wilhelm's arrogance, and the Empress did not wish to see him again. From Berlin the Kaiser apologised, but stressed the point that he considered it his duty to tell his Allies the whole truth with regard to any weakness in the Austrian Army, as in time of war this force would be called upon to fight shoulder to shoulder with the German troops; consequently he must earnestly beg that Francis Joseph would relieve the Crown Prince Rudolf of his position, and appoint in his place as Inspector of Infantry some competent and experienced officer. The Emperor ordered the Crown Prince to appear before him, and it was on this occasion that the Crown Prince asked his father to agree to the dissolution of his marriage. The Emperor,

who was exasperated enough to begin with, refused the request curtly, whereon the Crown Prince replied :

“ Then, Your Majesty, I know what I must do ! ”

“ Do whatever you want,” cried the Emperor, “ but I will never agree to the dissolution of your marriage ! ”

It is true that all this took place about five years before my time, but the information was given to me by a most “ official ” source.

Wilhelm II felt himself to be an authority on all subjects. He always knew everything better than anyone else ; he fancied himself in the rôle of apostle to the world, and as a silver-tongued orator in shining armour. Amongst ourselves we called him “ Kingfu,” after the doll in the Panoptikum in Munich, which, wound up, plays all kinds of pieces.

It is well known that Kaiser Wilhelm could not use his left arm, which was shorter. It is, however, less generally known that his left leg also functioned badly, and that he suffered from painful earache. Yet he fought against these physical defects with perfectly gigantic will-power, until mind triumphed over matter, and as a cavalry officer on service he took part—competent and unafraid—in all the mounted exercises. Certainly his horses had to be absolutely obedient and gentle as lambs, for he rode to all intents and purposes without using the reins, which he attached to a hook on his sword-belt and only occasionally grasped with his right hand.

At the manœuvres near Totis, at which Kaiser Wilhelm was present, his own special white horse did not arrive in time, and he was provided with a mount from the Emperor’s stables. This, however, caused



him considerable trouble, and when Francis Joseph saw that Wilhelm could not manage his animal, he himself dismounted, helped Wilhelm from the saddle and gave his own horse in exchange. Then he mounted the restive beast, and—at sixty-nine still a first-class horseman—soon brought it to order, and trotted back to Wilhelm quite unmoved.

At table Kaiser Wilhelm used a fork which at the same time would cut the food. On his left hand, which lay on his knee as if dead, he wore golden bracelets, and a great many rings to hide the fingers, which were quite black.

Our Emperor was especially irritated by Kaiser Wilhelm's almost morbid desire to be eternally in the limelight: his "Berlin Colleague's" fondness for theatrical situations; his eternal "appearance in a new rôle," first as Lohengrin-Knight, then as Admiral of the Northern Seas, then again as Hussar, or in some other military uniform, or even in the royal hunting costume, did not appeal to Francis Joseph. The hunting costume especially—this "Fancy Dress"—with the coat of military cut, buttoned high, double-breasted, the high boots, the small dented, greenish grey hat with the enormous double-feather mount, added to the orders and the hunting-knife in its sheath, hung at the belt, gave us the impression of a musical comedy. How much more a hunter did our own Emperor appear, in his simple, suitable forester's garb! However, when I once made some disapproving remark in the presence of one of Wilhelm's loaders, my North-German colleague remarked:

"Every man to his taste, you know! And each country must be allowed its own fashions. If we were

to wander around in the East Prussian sand or the border heather with bare knees and with short boots, it would look even worse! In the mountains your outfit may be quite all right, but with us on the flat, where thorns and undergrowth abound, it's better to wear high boots—and much more comfortable if only on account of the nettles. Besides, dear friend and contemporary, just think how folks went hunting in the days of your old Maria Theresa! What? Decked out in cloth of gold, with gaiters up to the chin, and with a huge tin whistle! (Hunting-horn)".

I thought over that answer, and I admit that if I did not find the royal Prussian hunting costume any more to my liking, I did at least from that time onward judge it rather more mercifully.

The tone of the Berlin Court, to judge by its head, seems to have been somewhat free. Probably because Wilhelm wanted to be popular at any cost, much happened of which our Emperor did not approve. For instance, as Francis Joseph was once walking with the German Emperor through the billiard-room at Schönbrunn, the Kaiser saw a doorkeeper (loader) whom he recognised. What did "Willie" do? He left our Emperor standing alone, hurried over to the loader and shook hands with him as if he had been a long-lost friend. That put our Emperor in a very bad humour.

That Wilhelm II made himself unpopular with our Emperor, especially in Budapest, I have already related in the chapter on "Manœuvres." On that occasion it also happened that Wilhelm II, through Prince Liechtenstein, asked me for some cigars, after our Emperor had retired. As on principle I never

handed anything out except at the Emperor's express command, I refused the request. First came a door-keeper, then one of the house-servants, then a Court official, and finally a Court Secretary. This, however, left me absolutely cold, and I simply replied each time :

" I have no cigars."

Next morning Prince Liechtenstein angrily demanded how I had dared to refuse cigars to the German Emperor.

" I shall report your behaviour to His Majesty," stormed the Prince.

" Pardon, Your Highness," I replied, " His Majesty has already been informed by me of this occurrence."

Prince Liechtenstein departed in a rage.

Once, it was the 20th September, 1897, the German Emperor came to Budapest, and Francis Joseph met his illustrious guest at the station. At eleven o'clock the royal train with the Kaiser was due. A company of Blue Hungarian Hussars formed the guard of honour, and at half-past ten our Emperor arrived in his carriage and six, *à la Daumont*, with coachman and postilions in the black-and-gold livery ; he was preceded by four carriages, in the first two of which sat the Chief Constable with three other high police officials and in the other two were the officials of the city, all in Hungarian dress.

The Emperor looked vexed. The crowd waited in silence, with only an occasional shout of " Long live the King ! "

Scarcely had he descended from the carriage when the Emperor complained to Prince Lobkowitz, then in command, that a lieutenant standing in the line in

the Rakoczi Road had endeavoured to hide a lighted cigarette in the hand with which he was grasping his drawn sword. When I heard this I smiled knowingly to myself, for I was well aware that it was not that poor lieutenant who was making my illustrious master so difficult, but rather the visit of his august friend from Berlin, for there was a rumour that a movement had been set on foot to separate Hungary from Austria after Francis Joseph's death and to place on the Hungarian throne the second son of Kaiser Wilhelm. Our Emperor, too, had heard of the project, for the Head of the Ministry, Baron Banffy himself, had informed His Majesty of it.

Then, when Kaiser Wilhelm was driving through the Hungarian capital at the side of our Emperor the crowds were beside themselves with joy. Hats and caps were flung into the air, and without a break rang out the shouts and roars of :

*"Eljen Vilmos Csaszar!"* (Long live Kaiser Wilhelm !)

Wilhelm was charmed ; he bowed and saluted till he was exhausted.

Assuredly it was not intended as a demonstration against our Emperor, but all the same one heard only "*Vilmos.*"

For four days Kaiser Wilhelm remained in Budapest ; wherever he showed himself—and he was quite an adept at thus "showing himself"—the Hungarian people cheered him heartily. He well knew how to sway the masses and to win them over to him ; more especially in the absence of our own Emperor did the German Kaiser exert himself to be particularly amiable and gracious.

On the fourth day of Wilhelm's stay our Emperor, sighing and half desperate, asked Baron Banffy :

" What—is he here yet ? " and when the German Emperor did eventually depart there was no happier man in Budapest than Francis Joseph.

At the Assembly of Princes in 1908 the German Emperor naturally made a speech. In the Marie Antoinette *salon* in Schönbrunn the allied princes and the mayors of the German free towns and the Hansa towns waited upon Francis Joseph, who was the thirteenth person present. Apart from Wilhelm II the old Prince Regent Luitpold of Bavaria, King George of Saxony, to his right King Wilhelm of Württemberg, and then the Grand-Dukes were present. His Majesty was very nervous that day, but when everything seemed to be going well he regained his equanimity and good-humour, although he had to change his uniform twelve times, for after the banquet he granted every guest a separate audience, at which our Emperor wore the uniform of the country in question.

At the close of Wilhelm's soaring periods His Majesty, deeply moved, thanked each prince personally.





THEODORE, ROOSEVELT

## CHAPTER XVII

### ROOSEVELT

**O**F the heads of non-European states received by Francis Joseph, the then President of the United States of America, Theodore Roosevelt, was undoubtedly the most interesting personality. His family came originally from Holland. Of middle height and strong build, he had wonderful teeth, but weak eyes, and always wore eye-glasses. It would have been useless for him to deny being a self-made man, for one saw it at a glance. Roosevelt was a splendid speaker, a daring rider and a courageous hunter. In his youth he studied in Heidelberg at the University, and as a volunteer took part in various affrays of the Students' Corps. Later he was colonel of the "Rough-Riders" whom he gathered together, and led his men to victory in many a mad attack.

In "Colonel" Roosevelt were combined the most varied characteristics : he was thinker, writer, orator, politician and statesman ; he swept across the wide prairies as a hunter and a rancher. Within twenty-eight years Roosevelt had risen from a simple representative of his party in Congress at Washington, to the all-powerful position of President of the United States.

After Washington, Franklin and Lincoln, Roosevelt must rank as the greatest architect and master-builder



of the American Free States. To many this may appear almost too high a valuation, but history will prove that he in particular instituted a mighty battle—the struggle against egoism in all its forms. Roosevelt exerted a very far-reaching influence in his native land, and no president since Andrew Jackson had been so popular as he. His work was gigantic; he stood at the head of the State, not merely a leader with a clear brain, but one with a heart as well. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for his efforts to establish peace after the Russo-Japanese War. On his honeymoon Roosevelt saw a great part of Europe; now, on the 15th April, 1910, he came with his son Kermit and his secretaries, Mr. O’Laughlin and Mr. Abbot, to Vienna, and was received by His Majesty in an audience that lasted an hour. Roosevelt had himself announced as “Colonel.” He was wearing a morning-coat, grey-and-black striped trousers, a light tie, top hat and a shabby grey mackintosh. This was the first time that the Emperor had permitted an official personage to appear at an audience in street clothes, instead of in uniform or full dress; it was not only a concession to Anglo-American custom, but chiefly a sign of his good-feeling towards Roosevelt.

The audience took place in the Emperor’s small, private study; His Majesty stepped forward to meet the American and shook him warmly by the hand. At parting the Emperor remarked:

“Good-bye till I see you in the morning at Schönbrunn!” (At the dinner.) In the court-yard Roosevelt was heartily cheered by the public. After the audience was over the Emperor said to me that he was very

well contented with the interview : the President was an interesting, witty man of the world, who had done great and good work for his people and for America, and was a first-class rider and hunter in addition.

Roosevelt saw the sights of Vienna and the suburbs, visiting also the very interesting Hunting Exhibition. He placed wreaths in the vault of the Church of the Capucines, was present at a show held in the Spanish Court Riding School, and attended various cavalry manœuvres of the Royal Hussars at the Breitensee barracks. At table at the Court His Majesty carried on a very lively conversation with the American in French ; Roosevelt related some of his hunting experiences in Africa, which interested the Emperor greatly. At Roosevelt's wish Viennese airs were played during the meal.

The men's Choral Union, which at one time had been most cordially received at the White House, serenaded the President at night in front of the American Embassy. Roosevelt then made a speech in which he said that never had there been such splendid singing heard at the White House as when the Choral Union had been there ; it had been wonderful.

After the banquet Roosevelt said to an aristocratic statesman that in his opinion the Emperor was "simply delightful." Through Prince Montenuovo His Majesty invited Roosevelt to stay if possible one day longer, as the Emperor wanted to arrange a hunting-trip for him. This, however, was unfortunately not possible, as according to the existing arrangements Count Apponyi was expecting Roosevelt in Pressburg.

. . . . .

Among the strange royal personages who came to Vienna to be received by our Emperor there were some quite original characters.

First of all must be mentioned the Shah of Persia, Nasr ed Din, who was so uncouth that he blew his nose on the curtains. The Persians did not bring any trunks with them, but their belongings, including those of the Shah, were stowed away in wrappers of black cloth, not unlike the sheets in which tailors here carry clothes.

Years later Nasr-ed-Din's son, Muzaffer-ed-Din, came on a visit to Vienna. At the Russian border he was received by our Austrian Gentlemen-in-Waiting, and led to the royal train; the train, however, had to proceed very slowly indeed, as his Persian Majesty was scared to death.

In his suite there were five Princes, quite a number of Grand Viziers and high officials, and six so-called "valets." These "valets" were invested with the Order of the Iron Cross, Third Class, although it later turned out that they occupied a position which, in European countries, would be considered extremely unorthodox. In addition, the Shah had an openly admitted predilection for the "eternal feminine"; he always looked most taken-aback and disappointed if he was not permitted to become much more "closely" acquainted with any young girl or lady whose appearance took his fancy.

At Lemberg there was a rather longer stop; Muzaffer descended from the train, took a seat in the station restaurant and dined—endlessly. At last the *nargileh* was brought; he gazed round the circle of his attendants, deciding to whom he should

accord the honour of puffing at the pipe till it was properly alight. His glance fell on one of his favourites; with a "Pst!" he signalled the one to whom he had granted the great honour of puffing at the mouthpiece of the pipe until the *nargileh*, so difficult to make draw, should be in going order. This permission to prepare the *nargileh* was a signal honour. Still, in the main the Shah certainly had more and better manners than his father, Nasr-ed-Din.

When on the 24th June, 1897, King Chulalongkorn of Siam visited the Emperor, his own personal servant stood behind his chair to wait upon him at the banquet. The King, who ate only ritual foods, had his meals cooked separately.

At Schönbrunn during the pleasure drives in carriages drawn by teams of four or six horses—the so-called "*Pirutschaden*"—the Siamese, seated at our Emperor's side, and in full view of the public, kept on all the time spitting through the coach window. Yet the Emperor told me one morning as he was dressing that although the Siamese might spit and behave badly, he was none the less far more decent and civilised than Kalakaua I, the King of the Sandwich Islands, who had behaved in a perfectly incredible manner in the Prater, about which I shall say more later.

Chulalongkorn had the most peculiar taste: he always wanted to see just the things that do not interest any of us. Further, neither he nor his servants could accustom themselves to fixed meal-times; they made no difference whatever between night and day, expecting food and drink to be always ready. Neither did the Siamese servants ever use

the beds prepared for them, but lay before the door of their master's room, or slept where they happened to be—some settling themselves comfortably in the silken upholstered arm-chairs, others on the cool steps of the staircase.

King Kalakaua, whom I have already mentioned, made a tour of the world in 1881, visiting amongst other places Japan, China, America and India, being received by Queen Victoria of England, by the Pope and by the King of Italy. When Francis Joseph, who at the time happened to be staying at Ischl, heard of Kalakaua's intention of visiting Vienna, he gave orders that this personage was to be received with all the honours due to a king. King David Kalakaua I was lodged at the Hotel Imperial, where a military guard of honour was posted, and was received by Archduke Albrecht as His Majesty's representative. He spoke English fluently. The first day he did nothing particularly noticeable, save that he came to the table absolutely naked, and had breakfast served to him thus, but later his behaviour was such that all the crowned heads of Europe must have felt themselves discredited by this noble monarch. King David had a box reserved for him at the "Third Coffee-House" on the Prater, where at the time a variety entertainment was also billed, and there he was received with all honour by the director of the concern, Mr. Ronacher. Even during the actual performance the King showed his pleasure in a somewhat unusual manner, for he interrupted all the turns by shouting, roaring and bellowing native airs to an accompaniment drummed on the woodwork with his stick; then, when dancing began after the show, he

removed his coat and took part. He kissed all the women whom he honoured with his favour—which caused uproarious applause on the part of the Prater public—and then, assisted by footmen, was conveyed to the Hotel Imperial in the royal carriage, absolutely dead to the world. It was such a scandal as had never been known before; the Austrian Court felt that it had been exposed to ridicule, and His Native Majesty was given to understand that Austria was not particularly anxious that he should prolong his stay.

In 1910 there came to us in Vienna the Chinese so-called "Prince of Atonement." He, accompanied by many high officials, had to make visits of apology and submission to all the Courts of Europe because of the horrors committed during the Boxer Rebellion. The Boxers, a political party filled with fanatical hatred of foreigners, had murdered numberless Christians, wrecking their homes, mission stations and churches, and one learned with horror that the entire Chinese population, led by the Queen-Mother Tsuhsi and Prince Tuantsching, desired to exterminate all Europeans. The Great Powers agreed among themselves that united action was imperative. An expedition to relieve Peking, led by Lord Seymour, miscarried; consequently the joy was correspondingly greater when the Taku Forts, commanding the mouth of the Peiho, were taken in 1898, for if they had remained in the hands of the Chinese the fate of all the foreigners in Tientsin, and of the small forces garrisoned there, would have been sealed. An international flotilla of nine gunboats and small cruisers, with a landing force of nine hundred men,

under the command of the German Naval Captain Pohl, was detailed to carry out this work. During the night of the 16th to 17th June the Chinese forts opened fire on the gunboats lying in the river; after six hours of fighting the forts were taken and occupied. The soul of the whole undertaking was Captain Lans of the German gunboat *Ilitis*, that, although frequently hit by heavy shells—one of which tore off Lans's left leg—played a major part in the successful execution of the attack. During June 1900 the Boxer Rebellion grew like wildfire, after the German Ambassador, Freiherr v. Ketteler, had been murdered at eight o'clock on the morning of the 20th June, by a Chinese soldier, while on his way to Prince Tuantsching.

The Austrian cruiser *Zenta*—whose heroic Commander fell on the field of honour—played a very prominent part in the rescue of the Europeans besieged in the foreign concession, taking aboard members of the French colony and the staff of the French Embassy. Apart from their leader, more than half the crew of the Austrian *Zenta* laid down their lives for the French, who swore eternal gratitude. That was the 14th August, 1900.

Came another 14th August—this time in 1914. The French armoured cruisers in the Adriatic sunk that very same *Zenta* by gunfire. . . .

After the rising had been stamped out the Powers demanded reparations for the unheard-of horrors practised on the Europeans, and for the looting of European possessions, both private and official. Twenty high Chinese officials were arraigned. The witnesses were all the European Ambassadors and Admirals—for as long as they could bear to give

their evidence. Twenty mandarins, clad in stiff silken robes, were led by their queues to the place of execution, where they were beheaded one after the other. Ten steps away from the condemned man sat his entire family. Admiral Bless v. Sambucci relates with what equanimity and heroic pride the mandarins died, and of the strength, energy and true greatness of spirit of the Chinese, whilst all around Europeans fainted from sheer disgust or from weak nerves.

The Chinese are a remarkable race ; they will yet overwhelm us all, and the prophetic words of Kaiser Wilhelm II, who, pointing towards the East once said : " Peoples of Europe, guard your most holy possessions ! " become of greater import as the days pass. The Chinese despises this life, but he also despises us with all his soul ; to him life is but a short journey, and the following instance may also serve to show with what dignity and contempt he meets the blows of misfortune.

When Peking was taken, the soldiers of all the Powers, quite irrespective of nationality, could scarcely have been said to work with silken gloves on. Much was destroyed ; much carried off as good loot. "*C'est la guerre !*" says the Frenchman, and the Chinese will certainly not act any differently if they once break through from the Far East to sweep us Europeans right and left into the sea with their iron brush. At any rate, in the palace of the Governor of Peking a German detachment of the occupying troops was quartered ; later some Austrians were also sent there. Now, in China the worship of ancestors is the supreme duty and the most sacred custom ; this



honour, however, does not consist of family portraits, but instead the name of each ancestor is inscribed on a beautifully polished tablet of precious wood, and the "ancestral tablets" are preserved with the greatest reverence, just as with us we have family picture galleries. Some families have anything up to two thousand such tablets, on which are inscribed in addition the life history and the great deeds of the person commemorated. Still, what does a Grenadier from Pommorania or a Bavarian from the backwoods know of that? How should he know that these little lacquered tablets, with the curly, to him quite unreadable writing, represent to the Chinese his most sacred possession? It was cold, and there was no fuel for the iron stoves sent out from Germany—"All right, then! Just pull me down some of those coloured boards from the wall. . . ." Very old and dry as they were, the tablets burned splendidly, helped by the fine varnish; as a matter of fact, they provided the best fuel imaginable.

When the war was at last over, and the Chinese Governor returned to his palace, he found it empty and desolate as the world doubtless was on the first day. Yet the noble lord made no sign; without the flicker of an eyelid he signed the form placed before him: "I found my palace in the state in which I handed it over."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE AUDIENCES

**A**N audience with the Emperor was for countless people a desire that was never fulfilled ; to those permitted to attend, it was one of the most important events in their lives.

In our childhood we were often told of what happened to the many foolish people to whom some good fairy granted three wishes, which she promised to make come true ; how this unexpected piece of good fortune found the poor things so unprepared that in their excitement and flurry they asked for the most idiotic and senseless things.

In the short space of a few minutes no one could have expressed in detail the wishes which were to him often matters of the greatest importance ; nor could His Majesty have reached a definite decision in the few moments covered by the audience. Consequently the actual audience was in most instances the last lap on the road from the asking of the favour, to its being granted. Anyone wishing to be received by the Emperor had therefore first to apply to the Private Chancellery ; his character, worth and reputation were then taken into consideration, and about a fortnight later he received an answer ; if he heard that he was to be granted an audience, it meant that his appeal would be favourably decided,

for naturally the decision had always been reached before the petitioner was allowed to enter His Majesty's presence ; the Emperor did not think over the question and give a definite answer for or against during the ten minutes or so that the audience lasted. The audience was for the purpose of giving the petitioner a chance to speak personally with his sovereign, and, on the other hand, to make it possible for the ruler to get to know the person whose request he had granted. If, however, an appeal had been decided negatively, then the petitioner was not granted an audience at all.

General audiences were held twice a week, from ten to one, Mondays and Thursdays. You can easily imagine what hard work that meant ; it is difficult enough to get through a visit lasting for three hours, but how much more difficult it must be for three long hours to be compelled to meet people of every description with equal friendliness, attention and willingness, never to let one of them see a trace of weariness or irritation—on the contrary, to make each one feel that the audience of that day has been arranged especially for his benefit. On such occasions the Emperor's iron constitution was of the greatest help, as was also his gift of noting features so closely that he knew people again even after a very long interval. How much it must have pleased and flattered various people when His Majesty, who had seen them previously only for a moment or two, recognised them again and addressed them by name.

Long before the hour appointed for the audience many people would assemble—often quite poor and humble people, who had come long distances, and

who probably for the first time in their lives were being thus honoured. They were all feverishly anxious not to be late, and would in fact much have preferred to have spent the preceding night at the Castle !

On the days when General Audiences were held, one saw side by side ladies in elegant toilettes and gentlemen in dress clothes or uniform, many people in national costume, and men and women in poor and threadbare garments. Some stared blankly and unsceingly before them ; others repeated to themselves for the hundredth time the few words which they wished to address to His Majesty in explanation of their petition, though it sometimes happened that those who were granted an audience were so excited and flustered that they did not say a single word, but simply knelt before the Emperor.

"No one is to kneel to me !" His Majesty was accustomed to say in such cases. He helped the women in knightly fashion to their feet, and spoke kindly to all, until timidity fled and words were again forthcoming. Others, who had been present at an audience before, would put on a blasé air after the reception, smiling and shaking hands with their friends and acquaintances half-patronisingly, half-pityingly !

As far as possible, the different persons were noted in order of rank, and were called by name, when it came to their turn, by the *aide-de-camp* on duty. Many a one could never remember later what words he had stammered, or in what kind of an apartment he had faced his sovereign ; he knew only that he had seen the Emperor, heard his ruler's voice, had fallen beneath the spell of imperial majesty—then, before

he quite knew where he was, he found himself in the ante-chamber once more.

Where means permitted, gentlemen appeared in full dress, soldiers in uniform, ladies in *petite toilette*, that is in high-necked afternoon-dresses, with hats. For poor people and those with scanty means there were naturally no rules at all regarding clothes.

From the fact that the people attending the audiences were arranged in representative groups you must on no account think that this meeting between Emperor and subjects was to His Majesty merely a time-taking and tedious formality. I can say with absolute certainty that His Majesty felt his decision, to grant or to refuse an audience, to be of the utmost importance; he was often sorely troubled when, against his personal inclination, he had to refuse a request, or equally was bound to grant one merely for "higher reasons of State." The Emperor knew full well that an unfounded refusal was just as prejudicial to his subjects' trust in him as the unjustifiable granting of a favour. Yet of more importance to him than the effect on the public was the necessity of convincing the petitioner that goodwill and the power of granting favours are not always identical.

Our whole education and the reading of fairy-tales and story-books had given us a totally wrong impression of what constitutes the rights and the powers of the Head of the State—rights and powers now vested in the present Chief of the Republic. One simply thought that the Emperor could grant or refuse favours as he thought fit, quite overlooking the fact that in all such instances Governmental Departments

were approached ; the Departments concerned stated their opinions, defended their findings stubbornly before His Majesty through Departmental Heads or Ministers, and were usually successful in preventing the establishment of any precedent that might weaken the authority of a law otherwise valid for all.

It was never remembered that a favourable answer to an appeal meant the cancellation of the decision of the officials concerned, and the majority considered the granting of an appeal in the light of a personal disavowal.

The Head of the State will only be saved from often unfounded *enmity*, and his “right of pardon” will only become truly valuable, when we have put aside the senseless custom of asking the very person who first passed judgment whether he agrees to what is virtually the repeal of his own decision !

When Ministers or Privy Councillors were to take the oath, the form and tenour of the audiences were strictly prescribed, and as I think that my readers may be interested in this point, I will repeat the formulæ; the oath taken by Privy Councillors—read by an official of the Council of Ministers—was as follows :

“ I swear an oath to the Almighty God, and promise by my honour and faith to be loyal, obedient and ever-ready to serve His Majesty, Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, etc., and Apostolic King of Hungary, my most merciful Lord ; to uphold the honour and further the interests and profits of His Royal and Imperial Apostolic Majesty ; to the best of my power to guard against all things dangerous and prejudicial and to give counsel against them. As His Majesty’s Privy Councillor I bring to my high service the

determination to hold secret even unto the grave information which may be entrusted to me by His Majesty or by other persons acting on his behalf, or which may reach me through other channels; and to advise in all that affects the commonweal, the interests, rights, honour, service and profit, laws or regulations of justice and all other points concerning His Majesty or his Kingdoms and Hereditary Lands, only that which is right and seemly, honourable, honest, without self-interest, and without consideration of my personal friendships or enmities, favours or donations, thus acting in every way in a manner befitting a Privy Councillor of His Royal and Imperial and Apostolic Majesty, in accordance with the oath which I now take. This in all truth and integrity. So help me God ! ”

The oath administered to Austrian Ministers was read by the Premier Departmental Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and ran as follows :

“ You shall swear an oath to the Almighty God, and promise on your honour and faith to be ever-ready in the service of, and obedient to the Most Illustrious and Mighty Prince and Lord Charles the First, by the Grace of God Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, etc., and Apostolic King of Hungary, our most merciful Lord, and after him to the heirs of his illustrious race and line; to further His Majesty’s honour and interest to the best of your ability; to set aside with might and main that which is detrimental and harmful, and to guard against it. Now that you have been appointed by His Royal and Imperial and Apostolic Majesty to the highest honour (e.g. Minister of Finance) you shall swear to keep

absolute faith with His Majesty the Emperor, to fulfil conscientiously at all times his decisions and commands ; in counsel, in placing before His Majesty, the Emperor proposals and opinions, and in the fulfilment of all your official duties, you, setting behind you every other consideration, must recognise always as your first duty the weal of His Majesty and of the State, keeping this aim ever before your eyes, and giving your opinions only after conscientious thought and mature deliberation, clearly and openly, without heed of praise or blame.

“ You shall swear to keep unbroken the fundamental laws of the State ; to obey the existing laws and the imperial regulations with absolute exactitude ; to arrange that by the means at your disposal the imperial rulings and commands be duly executed ; and to keep truly all State secrets.

“ You shall also swear that at the present time you do not belong to any foreign association for political purposes, nor will belong to such an association in the future.”

“ That which has now been put before me, and which I have clearly and well understood in its entirety, that will I faithfully and conscientiously do. So help me God ! ”

The oath was administered to Privy Councillors in the Privy Council Chamber, or as it was called the small ante-chamber, where they were appointed. The Emperor stood before a small table, around him officers of the Court and high officials from the Foreign Office ; opposite to the Emperor stood the newly-appointed Privy Councillor. The formula of the oath was not read before a crucifix.



## CHAPTER XIX

### REPRESENTATIVE GATHERINGS AT THE HABSBURG COURT

**I**T is well known that considerable importance was attached at the Imperial Austrian Court to ceremonial, with its attendant pleasure in stately pomp. The State Balls and Court Balls were amongst the most famous and most popular assemblies held under the sovereign's patronage. To the State Balls anyone with a decoration, as well as every officer, could get an invitation, and naturally all diplomats. For their ladies, however, it was a rather harder matter to obtain permission to attend these State Balls, for the success of an application depended upon the applicant's family-tree—both on her father's and her mother's side.

There certainly was one sure way of becoming eligible, and this was to have been received by the Empress, or later by one of the ladies acting in her stead; that, however, was not a particularly easy matter, and I remember that one aristocratic lady, but lately deceased, set all wheels in motion in order to get an invitation to Court, and yet was successful only after twenty years of endeavour. This very beautiful woman was a Countess in her own right, but her mother had been the daughter of a master-baker, and consequently the Empress would not receive her.

Even after the death of the Empress the beautiful Countess did not manage to induce Archduchess Maria Theresa to allow her to be presented, and it was only after Archduke Carl Ludwig died and Archduchess Maria Josefa, the mother of the later Emperor Karl, was the First Lady at Court, that the Countess gained her point.

A Court Ball was a more intimate affair, at which the aristocracy was more on its own, and was held in the Ceremonial Hall of the Hofburg. Officers appeared in undress-uniform and parade headgear; some fifteen to twenty officers were always invited to this ball as partners for the young archduchesses and countesses, for the young folks wanted to dance, and it is a curious fact that the old nobility is so often literally old.

The Emperor did not like these entertainments, for they disturbed his rest, as he was accustomed to going to bed between eight and half-past. Nevertheless, he always tirelessly carried out his duties as host; for hours on end he "held his circle," that is, he walked around the room chatting to his guests, unlike Kaiser Wilhelm, who had his guests led up to him on the dais. To His Majesty these "entertainments and amusements" were really only plagues and worries.

Now something about the State Ball: Scarcely had the Director of Ceremonies given his last orders before the guests were received by the Master of Ceremonies in his scarlet uniform banded with gold, and the eagle-tipped staff in his hand. While the guests were gathered in the "*Redoutensaal*" awaiting the entry of the Court, the Minister for Foreign Affairs

presented to the Emperor, in the "Marble Hall," the Chiefs of the Diplomatic Corps, whilst the staffs of the foreign embassies were presented by their own Heads; ladies of the Diplomatic Corps were presented by the doyenne of the ambassadresses; foreigners of distinction by the representatives of their native lands. The ambassadors and *chargés d'affaires* were presented to the Empress, or to the Archduchess representing her, by the Premier Departmental Head of the Foreign Office.

After such presentations had been made, the Court entered the "*Redoutensaal*," and this was always a moment of general tension and expectation.

The Grand Steward of the Court appeared at the threshold of the *salon*, rapped three times on the floor with his staff, and in a trice the stillness in the great apartment was such that one could more easily have heard a pin drop than distinguish the breathing of every one of the many hundred people who now formed a living gangway in the centre of the hall. The Master of Ceremonies, followed by the Grand Steward of the Court, strode to the middle of the *salon*, and only then did the Emperor, leading in the earlier years the Empress, following her death the senior Archduchess, make his entrance. He was followed by the members of the royal family with their suite, the Grand Stewards of the Court with their ladies, Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, Ladies-in-Waiting and Chamberlains.

Immediately His Majesty reached the dais he bowed, releasing the lady's arm, and she, with a curtsy took her seat next to the Emperor on the dais.

At precisely that moment Master Strauss raised his baton—and the dance began.

The Emperor generally led out the Duchess of Cumberland, as Queen of Hanover and as the doyenne of the nobility.

For the suite, at State and also at Court Balls, a few tables were set in the adjoining Alexander *salon*, so called because of the wonderful Gobelins depicting scenes from the life of Alexander which adorned its walls, to which members of His Majesty's immediate circle adjourned for tea. At State Balls there was only a buffet for the other guests, whereas those invited to the Court Balls took their seats at a table already laid.

At State Balls everyone crowded around the buffets, renowned for their well-stocked variety, which were set up in the rooms adjoining the "*Redoutensaal*"; and doubtless many of my readers will remember the shop that stood close to the Castle, with its sign "*Zur Schmauswaberl*," where after Court functions one could always buy the most delicious dainties of first-class quality. These were delicacies left over from the royal table, for anything that had once been set before guests at a Court entertainment might be disposed of at discretion by the Court and Kitchen Staffs. There were frequently whole hams, venison roasts, *pâtés de foie gras*, lobsters, with and without mayonnaise—in short, all the special dishes ever served on the imperial table.

Generally a Court Ball was held a few days after a State Ball. On such occasions ten people were usually seated at one table; there were five courses for the supper, and these had to be finished in half

an hour. At a State Ball the Emperor wore the white Field-Marshal's uniform ; at a Court Ball he, as did all gentlemen who were regimental commanders, donned the undress uniform, whilst diplomats appeared in minor Court dress.

In the "*Redoutensaal*" and in the Audience Chamber the Emperor walked round while dancing was in progress, watching the guests, and many an imperial proclamation first took shape to the strains of a waltz. In earlier times there was a charming custom ; young ladies engaged to be married were presented to His Majesty as brides-to-be, so when they saw the Emperor making a round of the *salon* they would form a group apart ; then, as soon as this bevy of fresh young maidens had been pointed out to His Majesty, he would come up to them and offer his congratulations.

Apart from the usual favour, each lady received in addition a small token, which the Emperor in his generosity gave as a mark of his esteem.

The highest State functions, such as State and Court Banquets and Field-Marshal's Banquets were also held in the Alexander *salon*, the Audience Chamber and the "*Redoutensaal*." The Emperor often entertained the commanders of the Viennese regiments, foreign officers and members of the diplomatic corps, as well as men of proven worth to the State, to Science, to the Church or to Art. Court Banquets were less formal, and the conversation quite natural.

On such occasions soldiers always entered the *salon* with sword buckled on, and wearing shako or parade headgear ; these were handed to the footmen only

when the guest was ready to take his seat at the table, and were placed by the servant on tables standing against the walls of the *salon*. Civilians wore evening-dress, with white tie, orders and ribbons.

Whilst the Master of the Kitchen was receiving new-comers, a Court Commissary indicated his place to each guest, for positions at table were naturally allotted in accordance with the rank held at Court by the person in question, such matters being settled by the Master of Ceremonies and the officials of the Steward's Department. At such Court Dinners the meal was always eaten at a dreadful rate, for a banquet of twelve or more courses scarcely lasted an hour! At the time appointed, when all the guests were assembled, the Master of the Kitchen escorted the Emperor from his apartments. The guests, in order of rank, stood in a half-circle; nearest to the door of His Majesty's apartments stood those of highest degree, who were thus greeted first, and after them came the others in turn. Immediately afterwards the guests always adjourned to the neighbouring dining hall, where the Emperor, by a sign visible only to the footmen, ordered them to begin their duties.

The footmen were divided into groups of four, each group being responsible for four guests—a task, in the case of foreign visitors, by no means easy! Each group had its head who did the actual serving, passing the separate dishes and platters to the guests; then one man had to attend to the wines only, but that was a very complicated job. A Court Dinner ordinarily began with oysters, so that Chablis had to be served; to the soup came beer; to the *hors*

*d'œuvres* Rhinewine ; to the fish Bordeaux ; to the entrées Champagne ; to the roast or game Sherry or Madeira ; to the sweets Tokay or *Lacrimæ Christi* ; and to black coffee, which at gala-banquets was served at the table, various liqueurs.

Each group of footmen had also the so-called "Sauce-man," who, as his name indicates, had to serve sauces and vegetables, and whose duty it was in addition to hold the dishes ready for the man doing the actual waiting.

The fourth and last man had one duty only, and that was to change the plates, but he had to acquire a speed worthy of a conjurer. Accuracy and absolute soundlessness were the first essential of such service, and when a banquet came to an end the whole staff, from the Master of the Kitchen down to the junior footman, breathed a silent sigh of relief that one more such function had passed off without mishap ; for His Majesty, however deeply he might appear to be engrossed in conversation with his neighbour, still saw every error, every slightest delay in the changing of the plates, and heard even the gentlest sound of a dish being set down—although that happened very rarely.

At such a gala-dinner there were never more than twenty, or at the very most twenty-five persons present. Opposite to the Emperor sat the Master of the Kitchen, at whose right sat the chief *aide-de-camp*, Count Paar, and at whose left the adjutant of the day. To the Emperor's right and left sat the guests of highest rank, and beyond them the others, arranged in accordance with Court or military seniority.

Yet perhaps the Audiences granted to separate individuals made an even greater impression than these functions of pomp and ceremonial splendour, which certainly served to accentuate the sovereign's high position in a most decisive manner.



## CHAPTER XX

### THE EMPEROR AND THE HUNGARIANS

UNDER the old monarchy the Hungarians were in the main very well liked by the German population of Austria. Even the school-books referred to them as the "knightly nation," and every Council School child knew the oath of fealty sworn to Maria Theresa by the Hungarian nobles—"Moriatur pro rege nostro." The Hungarian temperament, hospitality, fondness of luxury, gaiety, love for theatrical show, and not least the fiery wine, strengthened the sympathy between the two races. Political relations, however, were not quite so amicable, for the desire for self-government and the chauvinism of the Hungarians caused the Emperor much worry even during the last pre-war years. Yet that did not in the least affect personal relations with individual members of the Hungarian nation.

Baron Geza Fejervary especially was *persona gratissima* to the Emperor; the Baron was essentially pro-Austrian and was of the opinion that Hungary could not possibly exist without Austria, believing that the dual monarchy was the one essential point if the two states were to continue to live. That he was not particularly loved by those

elements in Hungary who saw salvation only in complete independence, is easy to understand.

Fejervary, who began his career as *aide-de-camp*, advanced quickly, entered the Honved Ministry as General, and there remained for many years, owing to the Emperor's favour ; then after Kossuth's term of office he was appointed Prime Minister. He was one of the oldest, and one of the last of the Knights of the Order of Maria Theresa, of the great and glorious war-time past of the old imperial army. He had been invested with the Order of the Knights of Maria Theresa for bravery on a reconnoitring expedition at Santa Lucia.

As Prime Minister, Fejervary was a fanatical upholder of a united Austro-Hungarian army. One day he reported to the Emperor that he intended to dissolve Parliament, as no fruitful work was being done, and the farmers in the provinces were anxious to have peace and order at last. In opposition to the opinion of the Commandant, Count Uexküll, Fejervary ordered Parliament to be dispersed by a single Honved infantry regiment, and it fell to the lot of the royal deputy, Nyiri, to address the members as follows :

“ In the name of His Royal, Imperial and Apostolic Majesty I declare this Parliament to be suspended, and order all members to leave the hall ! ”

The colonel commanding the regiment, however, had no cause to enter the hall, for the majority of the members had already left before the proclamation was read, whilst the others were roaming about in the building without making the slightest attempt to disobey the order.

After he had suspended Parliament, Fejervary handed in his resignation, and was promoted by the Emperor to Captain of the Royal Hungarian Life-guards.

On the occasion of some manœuvres His Majesty once invited Fejervary to attend, and as they sat at breakfast at half-past four everything around the Emperor was silence. Count Paar, sleepy as usual, said never a word, but Fejervary, well pleased with himself and greatly daring, told His Majesty a rather *risqué* joke. While he was still speaking, His Majesty interrupted, by turning to Count Paar with a :

"I say, Paar . . ." and then making some quite trivial remark, simply in order to silence Fejervary, who went crimson. However, a moment or two later the Emperor began to chat with him again, in order to smooth over the situation for Fejervary.

By this I do not suggest that His Majesty, had he been in the right mood and alone with the teller, would not have listened to, shall we say a "smoke-room" story.

After Fejervary's resignation Wekerle was appointed Prime Minister. Then the Emperor once again had his hands full with the Hungarians, for Wekerle actually followed His Majesty to Cap Martin to obtain his confirmation of the law regarding civil marriage.

Wekerle was a big, thick-set man, not averse from a good drink, and it always worried him that at State Banquets the wine served with any particular course was removed when the plates were changed ; so he always arranged matters that when he sat at the Emperor's left he had on his other side a "dry one"

—a teetotaler—which allowed him to empty his neighbour's glass in addition to his own; a trick that much amused His Majesty.

Wekerle's colleague, Count Koloman Tisza, once drank a large glassful of cold water after eating a generous helping of cucumber salad.

"That may have a bad effect on you!" remarked the Emperor.

Old Tisza, who was on very good terms with His Majesty and could therefore allow himself a *bon mot*, retorted promptly:

"Your Majesty, that won't hurt me! A Hungarian Prime Minister simply must have a good stomach!"

During the last years of Francis Joseph's reign the Autonomist Ministry with Kossuth and Count Apponyi was granted an audience, in order to wring from His Majesty his consent that the official language of the army in Hungary should be Hungarian and not German; that the army should be entirely independent; and that it should no longer be "Austria-Hungary," but "Austria and Hungary." The Emperor, however, remained firm, and the whole audience lasted a bare five minutes.

Besides the serious differences of opinion, it was often the small superficial matters that brought the trouble to a head; for instance, bad feeling was caused because "The Crowned King of Hungary" had driven through Budapest with his servants in the black and gold Austrian livery, instead of in the Hungarian colours. The Emperor himself never seems to have considered that such small, apparently unimportant details, could make him unpopular in Hungary.

When staying in the royal capital His Majesty always resided in the Ofner Königsburg, where he had very little freedom of movement indeed, for the hilly, terraced garden of the castle was not suitable for walking, and he missed the accustomed exercise badly. Only the silken hangings and gilded stucco showed that the "King's" study was set apart for someone of high rank, for otherwise it was exactly the same as the office for any ordinary Head of a Governmental Department. The bedroom, too, was of the sober simplicity so characteristic of Francis Joseph; at the head of the modest bed hung a picture of the Madonna, and at the foot opposite a tinted photograph of Franz Deaks, that great Hungarian who negotiated the treaty of 1867, and whose memory His Majesty held in high and grateful esteem.

On the walls of the living-room hung works of Hungarian masters, and in a corner of the smoke-room stood Johann Vasragh's "Camel-Rider"—perhaps that sculptor's finest work. The model, however, was not of bronze or marble, but of plaster of Paris, and the camel's long, straggling beard was always having to be stuck on afresh, for it seemed that the dusting-brush must have some particular grudge against it—so often was it knocked off.

The Throne-room, however, was splendid. It was a glorious sight when the glittering golden throne, draped with crimson, shone in the light of a thousand electric lights; when assembled, the Hungarian Church dignitaries and high officials, officers and nobles, in their exotic costumes ornamented with jewels, and when the wonderfully beautiful Hungarian

women, with their aristocratic features and sparkling jewels, swayed like living flowers in the arms of their gallant partners to the fiery strains of a *csardas* or the enticing notes of a waltz.

The Emperor's procedure in Budapest was exactly the same as in Vienna. Although in Budapest His Majesty was even more unapproachable than at home, amusing incidents did still happen occasionally, as, for instance, when after a State Banquet in the Königsburg he spoke to a certain Viscount M., asking him why he had given the Government so much trouble in a political matter. His Majesty spoke in German, and then asked the confused Viscount whether he understood what had been said.

"Certainly!" stammered the Viscount, "I do not understand German!"

Smilingly the Emperor turned to another gentleman.

His Majesty was sparing in the granting of Orders and other distinctions, for: "If I decorate everybody, soon my favours will be quite without value."

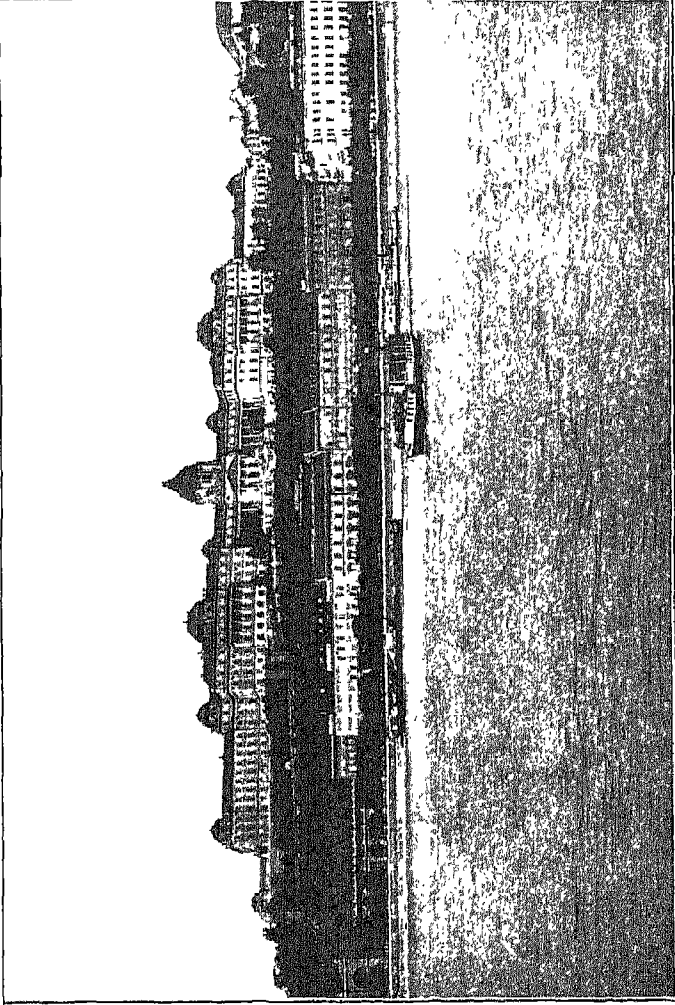
When the Hungarian "Thousandth Anniversary" celebrations were held, the Prince Primate of Hungary, Cardinal Claudius Vaszary, on behalf of the Hungarian people, renewed the oath of unbreakable loyalty to the House of Habsburg. Yet but a few years later that same Hungarian people rejected the unfortunate Emperor Karl, their crowned King and the legitimate wearer of the Holy Crown of St. Stephen, barring his entry into his hereditary kingdom. . . .

## CHAPTER XXI

EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH AND LORD MAYOR

DR. KARL LUEGER

THE relations between the Emperor and the Viennese Democrat, Dr. Karl Lueger, were rather peculiar. It is well known that Lueger, a gifted lawyer of Vienna, eventually became Lord Mayor, and leader of the Christian Socialist party in Austria; he began his career with the Liberals, became in the prime of life a Radical Anti-Semite, and then in later years was really a member of the moderate wing of the party that he had led to greatness. Though there is no doubt whatever but that Lueger was a good patriot and faithful to the Emperor, it cannot be denied that His Majesty was somewhat reserved as far as this most excellent politician was concerned. The reason for this lay not only in the fact that, to so thoroughly conservative a man as Francis Joseph, the turning from one political party to another was entirely ununderstandable, but more particularly, because the Emperor was averse from any radical tendency. For it was His Majesty's creed that a ruler is chosen by God alone, to guard the welfare of his subjects; that Parliament and party leaders exist only to aid the sovereign to carry out this duty—not to strive to further their



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The Bang viewed from the front.





own political ends at the expense of their compatriots' good.

Francis Joseph felt no more antipathy or dislike to the genial representative of the people than he did to the Social Democracy which was then still in its initial stage.

I can distinctly remember that some time before the outbreak of war the tramway employees struck on account of their poor rate of pay. The Emperor himself recommended that the strikers' claim be granted, and when he drove to Schönbrunn a few days later on his return from a hunting trip, drivers and conductors gave him a rousing reception as proof of their gratitude. While changing His Majesty asked me how the strike had been settled, and when I told him that all the claims made by the strikers had been allowed, he nodded in a satisfied manner and remarked :

"That was the sensible thing to do." Then added after a pause, very thoughtfully : "So that is why the people outside were so nice to me !"

As previously mentioned, the Emperor at first felt a certain degree of mistrust of Dr. Lueger, and refused to sanction his appointment to succeed the Liberal Lord Mayor, Dr. Prix, on the latter's death. His Majesty, however, grew very interested in Lueger's personality, and soon began to esteem him highly, and once he felt that Lueger was worthy of his popularity, and ended by showing sympathetic and kindly consideration to the Mayor who had virtually been forced upon him—for an unusual thing had happened, in that the population of Vienna had shown, by their great demonstrations, that they

insisted upon upholding their favourite's candidature, in spite of the position which the Emperor had taken at the outset.

When in 1908 the Emperor returned to Vienna after the annexation of Bosnia, he was greeted by a crowd of people spreading as far as the eye could see. Dr. Lueger was there at the head of the Councillors, and welcomed His Majesty in a splendid speech, instilled with sincerity and loyal devotion. Tensely everyone awaited the Emperor's reply, but His Majesty, embarrassed as we had never before seen him, after a few unsuccessful attempts only managed to say :

“ I thank you. How are you ? ”

When Lueger was lying seriously ill, Francis Joseph repeatedly sent Lieutenant-Colonel Baron Margutti to the sick-bed to enquire how the Mayor was progressing, and to give good wishes for his recovery. Lueger, moved and slightly astonished at this sign of his sovereign's favour, once said to Margutti :

“ If the Emperor sends to me, then surely the end of the world must be coming soon ! ”

In 1910 Lueger died ; His Majesty attended the funeral service, and Francis Joseph, Emperor by the Grace of God, laid a glorious wreath upon the coffin of the Favourite by the Grace of the People.





KATHERINA VON SCHIRATT

The photograph shows her in the rôle of the Empress Maria-Theresa.

## CHAPTER XXII

### EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH AND THE WORLD WAR

**W**HEN war broke out the Emperor's manifesto was published in all the papers and posted at the street corners, accompanied by a picture showing His Majesty signing the proclamation to his subjects. Only quite recently people have pointed to proclamation and picture as a proof that the aged Emperor, in an access of blood-thirstiness, decreed that the World War should begin ! Great must have been the desire to blacken the Emperor's memory, and equally great the lack of understanding that could accuse Francis Joseph of being a conscienceless and frivolous instigator of strife. Can anyone really be so entirely devoid of common sense as to think that an old man, drawing near to the grave ; a man who from his youth had been overwhelmed with work and pursued by an unkind fate ; a man who never allowed himself to rest because he felt within him the call to guard his people and to be responsible for them before the Almighty ; a man who had himself, time and again, weathered the mad storms of war, did not feel the need of peace, but lusted for conquest and slaughter ? Can any sane person believe that Francis Joseph, almost eighty years of age, Head of a constitutional monarchy in which the German element was in the

minority, and in which the most varied races made their influence felt, would have been powerful enough to carry out his desire had he, in defiance of all the laws of nature, wanted war to be declared ?

The truth is that the Emperor fought with all his might against a war, the results of which he considered incalculable. Over and over again he replied to those who wished to force his hand :

“ People who desire war, have not the slightest idea of what war really is ! ”

Count Berchtold, Minister for Foreign Affairs, did not cease to importune His Majesty, however, and at last the old Emperor, broken and unwilling, was forced to agree to his country's entry into the seemingly inevitable war. And the Emperor Francis Joseph was the first sacrifice to his own unwillingly given assent.

In those critical days the Emperor left Ischl and moved his quarters to Vienna. At the Penzing station he was received by Archduke Karl—later Emperor Karl. In Schönbrunn Archduke Friedrich, Commander-in-Chief of the army, awaited him.

From day to day the Emperor grew more and more depressed, and if I sometimes dared to suggest :

“ Your Majesty should go out a little into the fresh air,” my master either did not answer at all, or simply said :

“ You can see that I have heaps of work to do ! ”

I can safely say that from the beginning of the war till the day that he closed his eyes for ever, I never once saw the Emperor smile. Undoubtedly biased reports frequently endeavoured to show the position to be particularly favourable, but if such *communiqués*

were intended to cheer His Majesty, it must be admitted that they failed to attain their object. It is almost unnecessary to mention that the disasters of Przemyśl and Lemberg were crushing blows to His Majesty. Visits to the hospitals Francis Joseph undertook in the spirit in which a man might stand at the grave of his beloved dead.

From the very first day of the war the Emperor never ate white rolls, but insisted that black bread only should be served at his table ; even when there were guests, or when the children came, war-rations alone appeared. After a while this got quite too much for me, and one day I burst out :

“ If all the Court officials can eat white bread, surely there must be some for Your Majesty too ! ”

The success of this attempt on my part, however, was nil, and only when serious stomach trouble made the Royal Physician insist upon it did the Emperor permit—not rolls—but, at any rate, white bread to be baked for him.

One day there was a great demonstration on account of the famine. There was nothing to be had in the markets, for even flour and potatoes were finished. Then the rioting began ; food-shops were plundered, crowds of people gathered together in the Favoriten district, and marched to Schönbrunn. In the tumult and disturbance only two words could be distinguished : “ Bread ” and “ Famine.” The guard at Schönbrunn was reinforced and the iron gates were closed.

The *aide-de-camp* called me to him, and through the window showed me the excited mob pressing forward.



"How can I tell His Majesty?" I thought. "I can't go in to him—oh, if only he would ring!"

And—he rang.

"Give me a light coat!" said the Emperor.

"How can I make him ask me?" I wondered. Holding the coat in question I posted myself near the window, so that my master not only had to stand up, but had also to walk across to me; while I was helping him into the coat I looked intentionally, and with evident interest, out of the window. The Emperor followed my glance, saw that the gates were closed, and that there was an excited mass of people behind them.

"What is happening there?" he demanded.

"Am I permitted to tell Your Majesty the whole truth?"

Agitated, the Emperor nodded.

"The people are making a demonstration because of the famine. Children are being sent home by the teachers, or are fainting in the schools from weakness. Even the Duchess of Hohenberg's children are suffering dreadfully, as they all do, from the lack of food. There is no milk, no flour, no potatoes, no coal! Does Your Majesty know why Your Majesty is no longer allowed to drive through the Mariahilferstrasse? It is because they do not want Your Majesty to see the long queues of people, two deep, standing for hours on end in front of the food-shops in order to obtain just a few provisions. Hunger is king in Vienna!"

The Emperor looked straight at me, and in a moved voice said simply:

"I thank you!"

At once he called the *aide-de-camp*, and ordered

that the proper quarters should be informed by telephone that an end must be put immediately to this "unheard-of state of things"; anyone holding back victuals was to be dealt with summarily.

The next day the Prime Minister was called before His Majesty, and there was a real storm. Crimson with anger, the Emperor raged, closing with the words:

"And all this I learn for the first time from my valet!"

The morning of the very day of his death the Emperor had a long interview with the Prime Minister, Koerber, who gave His Majesty full details of the position and of the famine raging in the country; he described the poverty rampant over the length and breadth of the land, saying that matters could not possibly continue in the same way much longer; the people were growing more and more rebellious.

"If that is the case," replied His Majesty—I heard it from the next room—"If that is the case, then we must make peace—without taking my ally into consideration at all!"

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE DEATH OF THE EMPEROR

**T**HE last chapter in the book of the life of Emperor Francis Joseph is at the same time the last chapter in the history of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. What followed was but in the nature of an epilogue, even though much blood was spilled—a mournful sequel to the history of the Habsburg family.

Immediately upon Francis Joseph's death the wildest rumours sprang up like poisonous weeds, and in an atmosphere of gossip and idle talk soon grew beyond all bounds of likelihood or possibility.

"Emperor Francis Joseph is not dead," cried some, "it is only that he is too old and weak to remain the leader in these hard days of war. Some party at the Court has deposed him, and put a wooden dummy into the coffin in order to mislead the people!" Others knew from the "most reliable" sources that Francis Joseph had died in the very early days of the war, and that his death had been kept secret in order not to upset the public. The very "best informed people" talked of a peculiar institution in which men of the build and general appearance of His Majesty had been trained to impersonate him, and declared that as early as at the beginning of the twentieth

century the Emperor was no longer in the land of the living, his place having been taken ever since that time by one of the graduates of the above-mentioned establishment. Why, one clever person even said that I myself had for the last while played the Emperor's part, and that I had only refused to keep up the deception when I considered that there were too many people in the secret !

We know that history always repeats itself in this way when a great ruler dies ; the public will not believe that he is really dead, and many tales go round that he is still alive, or will awake again.

The Emperor contracted the first trace of the illness that caused his death in November 1913, when he accompanied the Russian Grand-Duke Nikolai Nikolajewitsch from Schönbrunn to the railway station on a rough, stormy and wet day, in an open carriage. On his return—for the first time to my knowledge—he felt tired and weak, and from that time onward he suffered from what later became chronic catarrh of the respiratory organs, until in 1916 his lungs were found to be gravely affected. Up to that time the Emperor was well simply and solely because he refused to be ill, and because, as he used to say, he must not be ill. I remember that he once told me the story of the sovereign whose physician drew a salary only so long as his master was well, but did not get a farthing if the ruler's ill-health necessitated his presence ! After all, the best police force is the one that keeps order so efficiently that its intervention is never needed.

In 1916 His Majesty's health and power of resistance were visibly declining ; when he knew definitely that

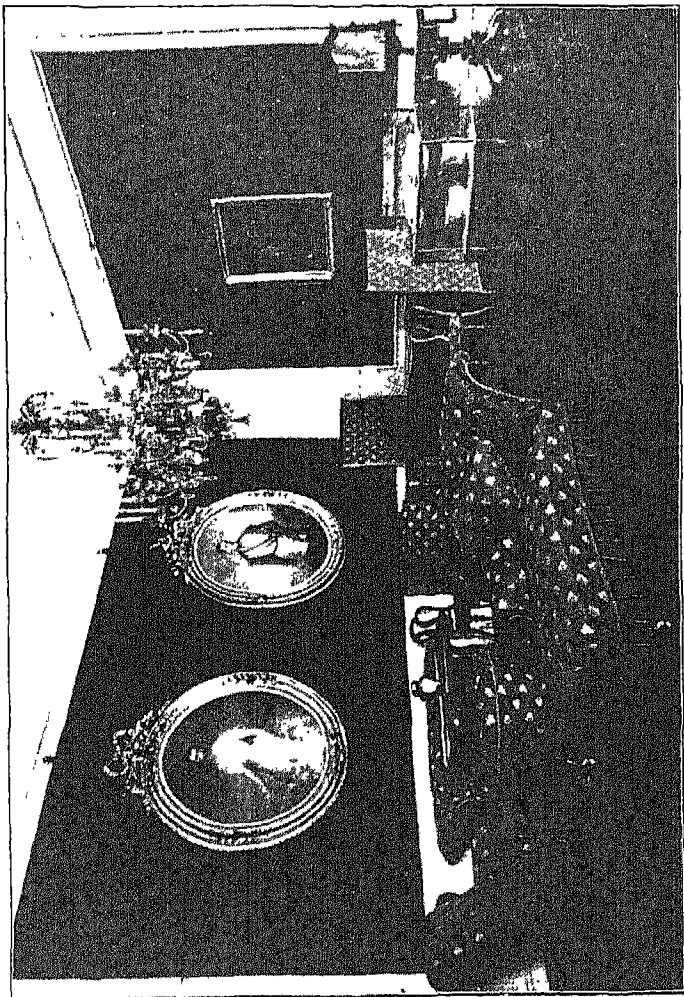
inflammation of the lungs had set in, he said thoughtfully :

“ That may be the beginning of the end ! ”

Unfortunately, he was right. . . .

In spite of a high fever during the last few days, His Majesty followed the routine that I had always known. It was pathetic to watch how the old man fought with the last reserves of his strength against the impending dissolution ; fought with all his might and all his iron will to push death back. It was not a desire to live that kept him going, and not a fear of death, but rather the terrible dread that the bells that would toll for him might sound also his country's knell.

Years before, at the time when there were many whispered rumours that the Heir-Apparent, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was growing steadily more discontented with the fact that the old Emperor would not slacken his hold on the reins of government, many a spiteful tale had been told that with an old man's stubbornness and insatiable lust for power, Francis Joseph was struggling to retain his high office, and would not allow anyone else to take a share, because he felt—quite ridiculously—that no one could take his place. The people who made it their business to represent the Emperor in that light to the public, and who said that His Majesty was merely a figurehead, an empty husk, a tool without will of his own in the hands of certain wire-pullers, have been proved to be miserably wrong. This “ puppet ” with super-human strength held together right to the moment when he drew his last breath a decaying monarchy that was cracking at every joint ; this “ empty husk ” stood



THE BEDROOM AT SCHÖNBRUNN IN WHICH THE EMPEROR DIED



upright as a symbol during the dreadful confusion of the World War, and, at a time when all authority was being attacked, was the embodiment of unassailable honour. Old, infirm, ill, dogged by misfortune, bowed by age, Francis Joseph even when nearing the grave had more force and vigorous power than untried youth could show.

A few days before his death it was suggested that nuns should nurse His Majesty, but he refused this with the words :

“My three servants who faithfully served their Emperor in health, shall also care for him in sickness.”

The day before his death Bishop Seidl visited the Emperor, to bring the blessing that the Pope had sent from Rome. His Majesty was then so weak that his death was expected any minute, and the Bishop understood how to turn the interview in such a way that it was equal to a confession on the Emperor's part. One hour before the end the Bishop was called again, to anoint the Emperor with the Holy Oil.

This last evening the Emperor prayed earnestly and long. Between his prayers he returned to his writing-desk, but the pen fell from his nerveless fingers and sadly he rested his weary head upon his right hand. From hour to hour he grew visibly weaker, and yet it was only after begging him many times that I was able to induce him to go to bed. Death very nearly overtook the Emperor sitting at his desk. . . .

Before lying down His Majesty said to me :

“I have not finished my work, so to-morrow wake me as usual at half-past three ! ”

An hour before his death no one could induce the Emperor to take a drink of tea, so I took the cup,



raised the pillow on which the dying sovereign's head rested, and managed to get him to swallow a few drops. His Majesty smiled wearily. "Why must it be just now?" he mused in a low voice.

When Councillor Ortner came, the Emperor was already unconscious. They gave him an injection of caffeine, and he revived; then he sank into a quiet sleep lasting two hours, and we foolishly began to hope again. Suddenly he was shaken by a severe bout of coughing—he raised himself a little—the cough became a rattle—the Emperor sank back against the pillows. . . .

That was the end.

The Emperor was not embalmed; formalin was merely injected into the jugular vein. Then for the last time I dressed my master in Field-Marshal's uniform. On that poor, still breast I fastened the Order of the Golden Fleece, the War Medal, the Officers' Service Cross and the two Jubilee Medals struck for the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversaries of his accession.

On his fingers the Emperor retained his wedding-ring and the signet ring, which he never took off. His daughters quarrelled bitterly over this signet ring; each wanted to have it; it was taken from the dead man's finger and then put back again. At last they decided that the noble hunter should wear his hunter's ring (the "chamois ring") even in the grave.

The first night only I and a door-keeper kept vigil. There was no clergyman. . . .

Archduchess Maria Theresa, of whom Francis Joseph had been very fond, came a couple of times each day to pray at the bier, and each time she came,

she strewed the bed with the fresh Alpine blooms His Majesty had particularly loved.

Frau v. Schratt was led into the death chamber of her noble friend on the arm of the young Emperor Karl. She had not been allowed to visit the Emperor during his last few days, because he wished, as he said, to spare her the sight of a very sick man.

When we nailed down the wooden coffin our hearts were as heavy and sad as if it were not only a great and powerful ruler, but also a dear relation who had died. Discouragement swept over us, as if a rock that had safely weathered the storms of centuries, and to which we had been able to cling with calm confidence, had been washed away by the waves of fate. . . . Fear and evil premonitions veiled our vision. . . .

After the Emperor's death the Father Superior of the Franciscans repeatedly asked that a metal coffin be provided, but very energetic intervention on the part of Frau v. Schratt was necessary before this surely not unreasonable request was granted by the imperial family.

